

FOLLOWING JESUS IN BOSSIER:
A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

*Rev. Donnie Wilkinson,
Senior Pastor*



Hidden Corners

As I write this, our house in Baton Rouge is in that strange in-between moment that happens just before a move.

Boxes are appearing in corners. Closets are being emptied. Furniture is being shifted around. April and I are making the final preparations to put the house on the market, and before long, hopefully very soon, April and John Harper will be making the move to Bossier.

Now, like most people, we tend to think of ourselves as reasonably clean and tidy. We are not obsessive about it, but the house is usually picked up, the counters wiped down, the floors swept. If someone were to drop by unexpectedly, we wouldn't panic. At least... that's how we see ourselves.

But there is something about preparing to move that introduces a kind of brutal honesty into the process.

Because when you start moving furniture, really moving it, or when you peer into the far back corners of cupboards and closets, you begin to discover things.

Dust bunnies that have quietly taken up residence.

Little piles of forgotten debris.

The accumulated detritus of daily life that somehow escaped our notice.

And I have to confess that I've noticed something surprising in myself as we've gone through this process.

It irritates me.

Not just mildly. There have been moments when it has made me almost irrationally frustrated. Borderline angry.

Which is curious when you stop and think about it.

Because the dust didn't suddenly appear overnight. It has been there all along.

What's changed is simply that now I can see it.

And that realization has made me think about something else.

Every now and then in the Christian life you hear someone tell a dramatic story of transformation.

A moment when everything changes.

"Once I was blind, but now I see."

Those stories are real. And when they happen they are beautiful.

But if I'm honest, that hasn't usually been how the life of discipleship has unfolded for me.

(continued inside)

FUMC Bossier
201 John Wesley Blvd
Bossier City, LA 71111



For most of us, it's not a single blinding moment of clarity. It's more like preparing to move. You start shifting things around... and suddenly you notice something that has been there all along. A habit you didn't realize had taken root. An attitude that needs adjusting. A corner of your life that could use some attention. And if we're not careful, our first reaction can be the same one I've had while cleaning the house. Frustration. Defensiveness. A quiet urge to dismiss what we're seeing. But over the years I've come to suspect that this slower process is actually one of the ways God's grace works. God, in mercy, does not show us everything at once. If the full inventory of our lives were laid out before us all in a single moment, it might be overwhelming. Instead, grace works patiently. Gradually. Over time. One corner at a time. God gently reveals the places in our lives that need tending. Not to shame us, but to heal us. And I can't think of a better time to reflect on that than the week leading up to Good Friday and Easter. Because Holy Week invites us to take an honest look at the human condition. To see the ways fear, pride, violence, and betrayal still shape our world... and sometimes our own hearts. But the message at the center of this week is not condemnation. It is grace. Because the truth is, there are messes in our lives that we simply cannot clean up on our own. And that is precisely why the cross stands at the center of our faith. In Jesus, God enters the dust and debris of human life. Not to turn away in frustration, but to redeem it. And Easter reminds us that even in the places that feel most hopeless... God is still at work bringing new life. So if this season reveals a few dusty corners in your life, take heart. You're not alone. And more importantly, you're not abandoned. Grace is already at work. One corner at a time.

Grace & Peace,
Donnie



APRIL 2026

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

5
Traditional Community
Worship 8:45a
Easter Brunch 10a
Contemporary
Community Worship 11a

6
Silver Foxes Fitness 10a
Prayer Ministry 11a
Magnolia Manor Communion
Day 10:30a
Ukulele Gumbo Rehearsal
3:30p

7
Traveling Light Bible Study
10a
Life 365 5:30-7:30p

1
UMM Breakfast 7a
Busy Bee Quilters and
Crafters 9a
Choir Rehearsal 6p
The Good and Beautiful You
Bible Study 6p

2
Thursday Morning Bible
Study 10a
Maundy Thursday Worship
6p

3
Good Friday Worship 6p

4

12
Traditional Community
Worship 8:45a
Sunday School 10a
Contemporary
Community Worship 11a
Yoga Church 4p
Youth Group 5p

13
Silver Foxes Fitness 10a
Prayer Ministry 11a
Ukulele Gumbo Rehearsal
3:30p

14
Traveling Light Bible Study
10a
Life 365 5:30-7:30p
Leadership Board 6p

15
UMM Breakfast 7a
Busy Bee Quilters and
Crafters 9a
Choir Rehearsal 6p
The Good and Beautiful You
Bible Study 6p

16
Thursday Morning Bible
Study 10a
Praise Team Rehearsal 6p
Brotherhood-Men's
Group 6p

17
Silver Foxes Fitness 10a

18

19
Traditional Community
Worship 8:45a
Sunday School 10a
Contemporary
Community Worship 11a
Yoga Church 4p
Youth Group 5p

20
Silver Foxes Fitness 10a
Prayer Ministry 11a
Ukulele Gumbo Rehearsal
3:30p

21
Women in Mission 10a
Traveling Light Bible Study
10a
Grit and Grace 5p
Life 365 5:30-7:30p
SBCE: Back to the Fifties
6:30p

22
UMM Breakfast 7a
Busy Bee Quilters and
Crafters 9a
Choir Rehearsal 6p
The Good and Beautiful You
Bible Study 6p

23
Thursday Morning Bible
Study 10a
Praise Team Rehearsal 5p

24
Silver Foxes Fitness 10a

25
Souper Saturday 8a
One Board Training 10a

26
Traditional Community
Worship 8:45a
Sunday School 10a
Contemporary
Community Worship 11a
Youth Group at Altitude
6p

27
Silver Foxes Fitness 10a
Prayer Ministry 11a
Ukulele Gumbo Rehearsal
3:30p

28
Traveling Light Bible Study
10a
Life 365 5:30-7:30p

29
UMM Breakfast 7a
Busy Bee Quilters and
Crafters 9a
Choir Rehearsal 6p
The Good and Beautiful You
Bible Study 6p

30
Thursday Morning Bible
Study 10a
Praise Team Rehearsal 5p



BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT OUR STAFF AT OFFICE@FUMCBOSSIER.ORG

ANNIVERSARIES

Ken & Patti Daniel	4/6
Joe & Debbie Fowler	4/29

BIRTHDAYS

Brenna Doss	4/16
Leslie Santure	4/18
Mary Carol Lowry	4/19
Glynn Alderman	4/21
Brad Pollitt	4/21
Carey DeLaune	4/24
Wade Hines	4/24
Ken Allmond	4/25
Michael Santure	4/26
Kaye Stevens	4/27
Madeline DeLaune	4/28
Don Digilormo	4/28
LillyAnne Murray	4/28

BIRTHDAYS

Susan Bryant	4/1
Gary Hackman	4/1
Darlene Linton	4/2
June Feaster	4/4
Caden Dunn	4/5
Paul Anderson	4/7
Trent Choate	4/8
Jonathan Pollitt	4/9
Bridget Anderson	4/12
Pam Crews	4/13
Kiersten Whelply	4/14
Shirley Rutscher	4/15

CHECK OUT OUR CHURCH APP

- Register & pay for events
- Check-in for service/events
- Church Calendar
- Giving/Offering



A DAY IN THE LIFE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT OUR STAFF AT OFFICE@FUMCBOSSIER.ORG

FUMC BOSSIER



FIRST FRIENDS CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT SHANNON KELLEY AT SKELLEY@FUMCBOSSIER.ORG



April is a special time at our preschool as we focus on the true meaning of Easter. Throughout the month, the children will learn about God's love, Jesus, and the joy of the resurrection through age-appropriate Bible stories, songs, crafts, and classroom activities.

We will talk about how Easter reminds us of hope, new life, and the amazing love Jesus has for all of us. Our goal is to help the children understand this beautiful message in a simple and meaningful way.

Registration for the upcoming school year 2026-2027 is in full swing! Don't forget to register your child before we run out of room!

www.fumcbossier.org



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CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT ELISA HINES AT CHILDREN@FUMCBOSSIER.ORG

Hello First Families!

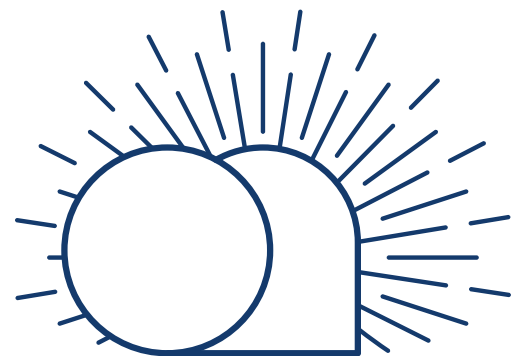
Spring is here, and that means one of the most joyful seasons in the church year—Easter! This month we will be spending time with the children learning about the events leading up to Easter and celebrating the amazing news that Jesus is alive! Through stories, activities, and crafts, we'll be talking about the love and hope we have because of the resurrection.

We are also excited for the fun traditions that come with the season. Don't forget to join us for our Easter Egg Hunt on Palm Sunday. It's always a fun time for the kids to celebrate together!

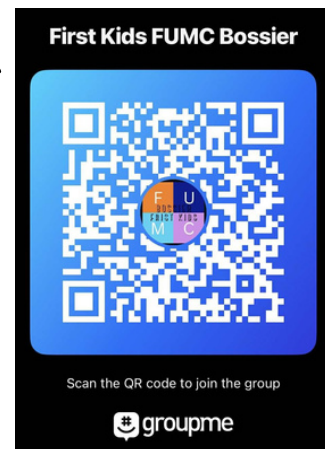
Looking ahead to summer, registration for Vacation Bible School is now open! VBS is one of the highlights of the year, filled with games, music, crafts, and learning more about God's love in a fun and memorable way. Be sure to reserve your child's spot early and invite friends to come along too! Parents are encouraged to join in and volunteer as well!

We are so thankful for the wonderful children and families that make this ministry such a blessing. We look forward to celebrating Easter together and making great memories this summer at VBS. He is risen!

Love and Blessings,
Elisa



STAY UP TO DATE WITH PARENT INFORMATION ON GROUP ME



www.fumcbossier.org



GET CONNECTED TO A SMALL COMMUNITY

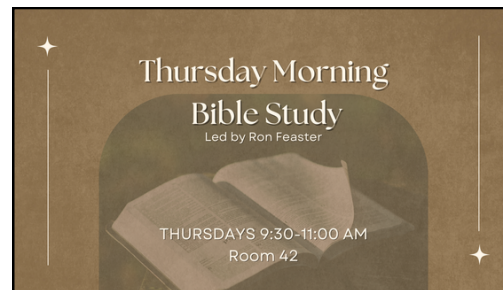
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT OUR STAFF AT OFFICE@FUMCBOSSIER.ORG



Tuesday Nights - 5:30-7:30 PM - Kitchen and Cafe
Life 365 is a Christ-centered community where people of all ages grow in faith, support one another, and live out God's love every day of the year.

THE GOOD AND BEAUTIFUL BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday Nights - 6:00-7:00 PM - Midyett Room
The Good and Beautiful Bible Study continues.

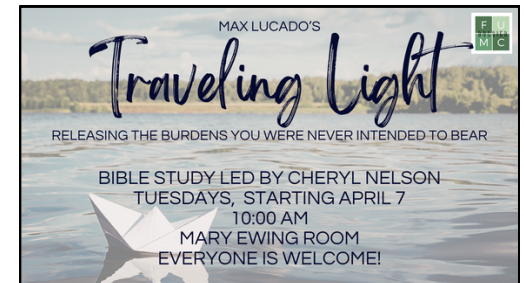


THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Thursdays at 9:30 AM- Mary Ewing Room
Study is led by Ron Feaster.

TRAVELING LIGHT BIBLE STUDY

Tuesdays at 10:00 AM - Mary Ewing Room
Bible Study led by Cheryl Nelson
Everyone is welcome!



BROTHERHOOD-MEN'S GROUP

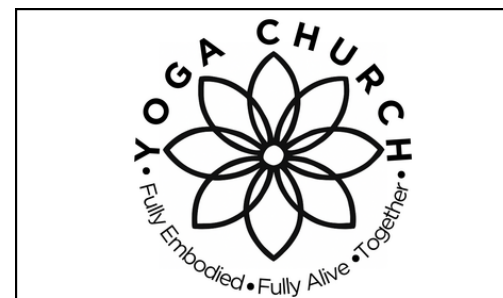
First and Third Thursdays 6:00-7:00 PM Room 43

Brotherhood is a gathering of men committed to growing in Christ together. We're not trying to build perfect men. We're trying to build faithful ones...the kind who walk with Jesus in the real world.



THE SWEET SHUFFLE

Fourth Friday- 6:00-8:00 PM Fellowship Hall
No Meeting in April, See you in May.



YOGA CHURCH

Third Sunday- 4:00-5:30 PM - Fellowship Hall

NEW! A worship service that blends breath and body with Scripture and Holy Communion. Yoga Church is designed to help us prepare our whole selves-- body, mind and spirit-- to encounter Christ in the reading of the Gospel and in the bread and cup.

If you long for a quiet, embodied, contemplative space... If you desire to feel more fully alive in God's presence...If you're simply curious... we would love for you to join.

Please, bring a yoga mat and a water bottle.

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MISSIONS THAT MATTER

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT OUR STAFF AT OFFICE@FUMCBOSSIER.ORG

MAGNOLIA MANOR MISSIONS

We will serve communion on the First Monday of the month, April 6.



WOMEN IN MISSION

April 21-- 10:00 AM- Room 49
We meet on the third Tuesday of each month. Come join us if you would like to help with our Mission Projects.



THE GRIT & GRACE MISSION TEAM

April 21 5:00 PM- Mary Ewing Room
We meet on the third Tuesday of each month. Come join us if you would like to help with our Mission Projects. Everyone Welcome!



MILITARY FAMILIES MINISTRY

Our mission is to serve those who serve, reflecting Christ's love through community, care, and connection.



SOUPER SATURDAY

April 25- 8:00 AM - FUMC BOSSIER KITCHEN
Come pack meals or deliver meals to the home bound & those who receive meals on wheels. We provide meals the last Saturday of each month.



HELPING HANDS FOOD PANTRY

Open Monday-Thursday 9:00-11:30 AM
Helping Hands Food Pantry -Through generosity, compassion, and service, Helping Hands helps to ensure that no one in our community goes hungry.
If interested in volunteering contact Kiersten Whelply.



UMM MEN'S BREAKFAST

Wednesdays- 7:00 AM
Our United Methodist Men's Breakfast meets weekly for food, fellowship, and faith. It's a time for men to gather, build friendships, and grow together in Christ in a relaxed, welcoming setting.



RUSHEON DONUT DROP

Tuesdays- 7:20 AM - Following the Bossier School Calendar
Every week we gather at Rusheon's crosswalk to greet students with a smile—and a free donut! It's our way of offering a taste of grace to kids as they start their day. With a quick hello, a word of encouragement, and a sugary treat on the go, this ministry helps brighten mornings, build connections, and remind students that they are seen, valued, and supported—one donut at a time.



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YOUTH MINISTRY

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT SARAH MCCURLEY AT SMCCURLEY@FUMCBOSSIER.ORG

MARCH RECAP!

March was a full and exciting month for our youth! From Spring Break and Mission Night to Chopped Night, Winter Jam, and Youth Day with the Bishop, our students stayed busy and engaged in meaningful ways. In the midst of all the activity, we took time during our evening devotionals to center ourselves in the season of Lent—exploring what it means, why we observe it, and how we can each grow through it. We are also walking alongside three of our 8th graders as they journey through Confirmation. The conversations we've been having with them have been truly incredible. Our students continue to show just how thoughtful, insightful, and curious they are—it's a joy to witness their faith taking shape.



We have lots of dates available on the Youth Meal Train! If you've never provided a meal and want more info, please contact Sarah.

APRIL YOUTH NIGHTS



STAY UP TO DATE WITH FUMC BOSSIER YOUTH TEXTS

Text @2020fumcy to 81010 - students

Text @2020fumcp to 81010 - parents

www.fumcbossier.org





A WORD FROM THE PRAYER ROOM

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT OUR STAFF AT OFFICE@FUMCBOSSIER.ORG



It is SPRING! April is with us. Another welcome change. Green leaves appearing, birds seeking nesting spots, gardeners are stirring the earth. There is an air of Hope, Joy, Faith, and to crown the season of advent, there is Easter before us and the greatest feeling of all—Love. The empty cross on which our Lord gave his Life for us because He loves us. “Thank you, Lord,” automatically comes out of us, as we bow in praise and thankfulness when we contemplate the gift of eternal life.

There is an inherent inclination to say “Let’s pray.” Do you believe that? Did God instill in us the need to pray? When there is an unexpected need or crisis in your life or before a complete helplessness envelops you, don’t you turn to the one who is always available no matter the circumstance? “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1 “Take a step toward God and He will take two steps toward you,” says the old adage.

Look back and remember the incident that provoked your prayerful instinct. Look forward to the knowledge and assurance that God will be with you in all circumstances as you travel this rocky road called life. Thank you, God!



FIRST FAMILY FOCUS NEWSLETTER

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT OUR STAFF AT OFFICE@FUMCBOSSIER.ORG

Our monthly newsletter is a collaboration by all members of our church staff. If you notice any discrepancies please let us know so we can address them.

If your group or class has anything for the newsletter or bulletin you can turn it in at the office or email it to office@fumcbossier.org

Photos, information, recipes, etc. can also be sent to the office as well.

Please, make sure to submit all information for the newsletter by the **20th of the month** to ensure it is included in the upcoming month’s issue.

Thank you!

www.fumcbossier.org



THE CHURCH MOUSE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT OUR STAFF AT OFFICE@FUMCBOSSIER.ORG

Welcome April!!!

“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth.” - Song of Solomon 2: 11 -12

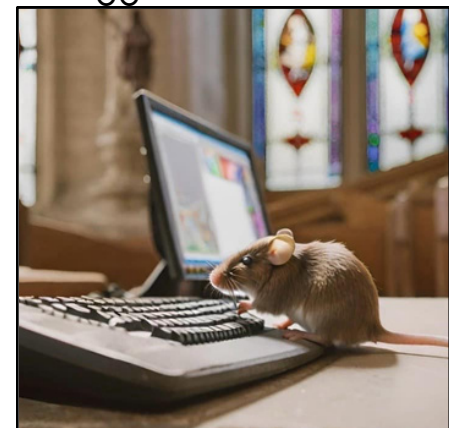
Everyone is ready to spruce up their flower beds for a beautiful display of spring and summer blooms. Church Mouse listened in when YAH attendees heard lots of wonderful ideas for getting the seeds ready for planting.

Six Lenten lunches were held with inspiring talks to help everyone prepare for Easter. FUMC - Bossier has so many great cooks and delicious crumbs are always my delight. The comradery of church members working together in the kitchen is one of our church’s special blessings.

The beauty of the Easter lily is fascinating in that a beautiful flower comes from a bulb whose decayed appearance gives little insight as to what lies hidden within its odd shape. Each bulb releases new life in its proper season. The bulb is symbolic of what can happen in each of our lives when we have difficult periods of struggle to be a faithful Christian. The beautiful Easter lilies are visions of faith to help us remember that “new life” is possible when we go through a dormant period. As we look upon renewal of life as symbolized by Easter, we receive the inspiration for renewal in our own lives. “And let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.” Hebrews 10: 23

“He is not here for he is risen, as he said.” - Matthew 28:6

Happy Easter,
Church Mouse



SENIOR ADULT MINISTRIES

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT OUR STAFF AT OFFICE@FUMCBOSSIER.ORG



YOUNG-AT-HEART

2ND THURSDAYS EACH MONTH- 10:30 AM-FELLOWSHIP HALL
April 9- Lunch, drinks and dessert provided. Cost is \$5.00. Call the church office to make your reservation.

SILVER FOXES FITNESS

Mondays and Fridays 10:00 AM-Fellowship Hall
Join our Silver Foxes for a Chair Exercise Class.



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EASTER SUNDAY BRUNCH

EASTER SUNDAY AFTER FIRST SERVICE IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

YOGA CHURCH

If you long for a quiet, embodied, contemplative space... If you desire to feel more fully alive in God's presence... If you're simply curious... we would love for you to join.

Every Third Sunday at 4 PM
in the Fellowship Hall
Please, bring a yoga mat and a water bottle.

Childcare is available.

KINGDOM QUEST

AN EPIC JOURNEY TO DISCOVER GOD'S KINGDOM

JUNE 22-26

MORE INFO COMING SOON!

EASTER

He is Risen

+

Broccoli Salad

Spring gatherings and Easter meals always seem to call for something fresh, colorful, and easy to share. This broccoli salad is a favorite go-to dishes for potlucks and family meals. It's crunchy, a little sweet, a little savory, and always disappears quickly! Add something bright to your April table and enjoy sharing it with family and friends this season.

Ingredients:

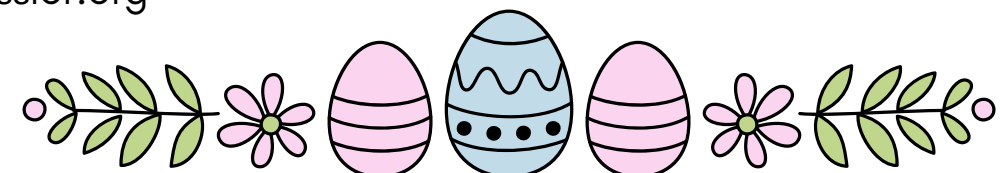
- 8 ounces bacon
- 5 cups small broccoli florets
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
- 1/3 cup chopped onion
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup sunflower kernels
- 1 cup halved cherry tomatoes (optional)



Directions:

1. Cut the bacon into small pieces and cook over medium heat just until crisp; drain on paper towels.
2. Bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add the broccoli and blanch until bright green and slightly softened, about 3 minutes. Drain well, run under cold water to stop the cooking, and drain again.
3. In a mixing bowl, combine the mayonnaise, vinegar, onion, sugar and raisins, let sit at least 10 minutes. Add the broccoli and tomatoes and toss the coat with the dressing. Refrigerate for 1 hour.
4. Just before servings, fold in the sunflower kernels and the bacon pieces. Serve immediately.

Recipe submissions for Stirring the Spirit: Drop off at the church office or email office@fumcbossier.org



Our Military Ministry is honored to serve the families in our community who are navigating the challenges of deployment. When a loved one is away serving our country, the routines of daily life can become overwhelming. Simple things—like preparing meals—can feel like heavy burdens in an already stressful season.

That’s where our church family steps in—and where these families can truly become part of our First Family.

Through organized meal trains, we come alongside them to provide practical support and a reminder that they are not alone. Volunteers sign up to deliver home-cooked meals, send takeout, or provide gift cards, helping to ease the day-to-day load. More than just food, each delivery is an expression of care, encouragement, and gratitude for the sacrifice their family is making.

This ministry is a meaningful way First UMC Bossier lives out its faith—serving others, building community, and honoring those who serve. Together, we can make a difference, one meal at a time.



OUR CHURCH FAMILY HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW LOVE!

WE HAVE TWO MILITARY FAMILIES WHOSE HUSBANDS ARE CURRENTLY DEPLOYED. IF YOU'RE ABLE, PLEASE CONSIDER SIGNING UP TO BRING A MEAL. WHETHER IT'S HOME-COOKED OR TAKEOUT, OR EVEN A GIFT CARD. EVERY LITTLE BIT HELPS LIGHTEN THE LOAD AND REMINDS THESE FAMILIES THEY ARE SUPPORTED AND NOT ALONE.

WEAVER FAMILY



MOER FAMILY



SIGN UP USING THE QR CODE OR CALL THE OFFICE TO COORDINATE 318.742.3823

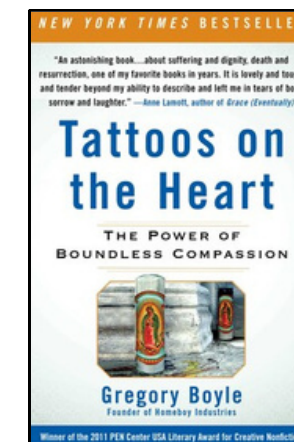
Each month, we highlight a podcast, book, song, or other resource to encourage reflection, growth, and connection in your faith journey. Whether it’s music that uplifts, a book that inspires, or a podcast that sparks conversation, our monthly pick is chosen to nourish your spirit and spark meaningful moments in your life. April picks are from Pastor Donnie.

Every so often, someone asks, “What are you reading these days?” It’s one of my favorite questions. Books and podcasts are not just information sources for me. They are companions. Some shape a season. A few shape a life. And every now and then, there’s one you return to again and again because it keeps saying something true. Here are two books and one podcast that have done that for me.

Tattoos on the Heart – Greg Boyle

If you have never read *Tattoos on the Heart*, I envy you. Greg Boyle is a Jesuit priest who founded Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles — the largest gang intervention and rehabilitation program in the world. But this book is not policy. It’s not sociology. It’s not theory. It’s story. Story after story of men and women who have been written off by the world — and what happens when someone refuses to give up on them. It is one of the clearest windows I know into what the best of Jesuit spirituality looks like: fierce tenderness, radical kinship, and a God who moves toward the margins.

My son John Harper is heading to Loyola New Orleans this fall, and I handed him my copy so he could begin to glimpse that tradition at its best. You will laugh out loud. You will likely wipe away tears. And if you’re anything like me, you will finish it wanting to love people more generously.

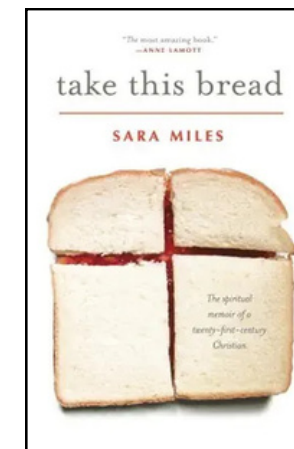


Take This Bread – Sara Miles

Sara Miles’ *Take This Bread* has quietly shaped my ministry for years. It begins with a simple act: she walks into a church, receives Communion for the first time, and her life changes. From that moment, the Eucharist becomes not just a ritual for her, but a way of seeing the world. What unfolds is a story about food, faith, and the radical hospitality of Jesus — one that eventually leads her to start a food pantry at her church’s communion rail.

There are ideas in this book that continue to nudge me — especially as we discern where God may be leading First Bossier. It challenges the neat boundaries we sometimes draw between worship and mission, altar and table, sacrament and service.

It is beautifully written. Honest. Grounded. And alive with hope.



Podcast: Ask NT Wright Anything

A podcast I look forward to each time it drops is *Ask NT Wright Anything*. Tom Wright, one of my favorite New Testament scholars, and Mike Bird, an outstanding scholar in his own right, respond to questions from around the world about the Bible, Jesus, theology, and the life of faith.

What I appreciate most is not that I always agree with their conclusions. I don’t. What I appreciate is the depth and care with which they approach the questions. They model what it looks like to think carefully, generously, and faithfully in a time when hot takes are easier than patient reflection.

If you enjoy serious engagement with Scripture — without it feeling dry or distant — it’s well worth your time.



If you pick up one of these books or tune into the podcast, I’d love to hear what resonates with you. Good stories shape us. Good questions deepen us. And sometimes, the right companion at the right time can quietly change the direction of your life.

Happy reading — and listening.