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The Methodist Messenger

First United Methodist Church
Edinburg, Texas

September 2026



“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by,
and that has made all the difference.”

Robert Frost’s lines have a way of showing up at graduations and inspirational posters, usually read as a simple call to be bold, to choose the unconventional path. But read the whole poem, and it’s stranger and more honest than that. The speaker admits both roads were worn “really about the same.” He doesn’t know, and won’t know for years, whether his choice was the right one. He only knows it was his choice, and that choosing shaped everything after.

I don’t think discipleship is about two roads—one marked salvation, one marked ruin, and we’d better pick correctly or else. That’s not the gospel we’ve been living with all summer in Matthew. The Christian life isn’t a fork where one path is safe and the other is a trap. It’s more like Frost’s speaker standing in the wood, looking at what’s in front of him, and choosing to walk—not out of fear, but because walking is what he’s made for.

We just finished a summer in the Gospel of Matthew, ending with the Great Commission—Jesus sending the disciples out to make disciples, to baptize, to teach, promising to be with us "always, to the end of the age." We talked about how that ending is not necessarily a command to go somewhere far away. Rather, it’s an invitation to participate—to join the presence of God, the healing work of God, the inbreaking of God’s kingdom, right where we already are. In a classroom. At a kitchen table. In a hospital waiting room. Whether we’re the teacher or the student, the parent or the grandparent, the staff or the volunteer—that’s the road. Not a road away from ordinary life, but a road straight through the middle of it.

Now we’ve begun a new sermon series around the United Methodist Council of Bishops’ vision statement—asking together what it actually means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ in this denomination, at this moment. I hope it’s a time of refreshing and reflection. How is God calling us to walk the disciple’s way: a way of loving, serving, leading, being transformed, and transforming the world around us in the process?

Here’s the thing I keep coming back to: the choice in front of us isn’t “grit your teeth and try harder.” It’s more: Will we let ourselves be led by the Holy Spirit? Will we let ourselves be changed from the inside out, instead of just managing our own behavior from the outside in? Will we partner with God, using the particular gifts and abilities God has already placed in our hands? For this time and this place?

That’s the road less traveled—not because it’s mysterious and strange, but because surrender is rare. Letting ourselves be led is harder than leading ourselves. But we don’t walk it alone. Jesus is with us, Matthew tells us, to the very end of the age.

So—where is God inviting you to participate today? What would it look like to let yourself be led?

Caminando contigo / Walking with you,
Pastor Sarah

September Dates To Put In Your Calendar

- September 7th- Labor Day / Office Closed!
- September 8th- Bag Rice & Beans
- September 17th -Bag Dry Goods at 1 PM
- September 19th Food Distribution 8AM



Adult Sunday School

Join us at 9:30 a.m. Sunday mornings.
We are just beginning a new video study "Promised Land" by Ray Vander Laan. Filmed on location this 5-part study will guide us to five locations of significant importance both in ancient times and today.
We will see how God guided his people to a specific place - the Promised Land - to impact the world then and now.

Server Appreciation

Blessings to our August communion servers: Craig and Pam Bovee, and Gary and Linda Henrichson. Thank you for helping Pastor Sarah serve God's people at Jesus' table!

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in men."
1 Corinthians 12:4-6 NIV
Thanks be to GOD.

Grief Support Group

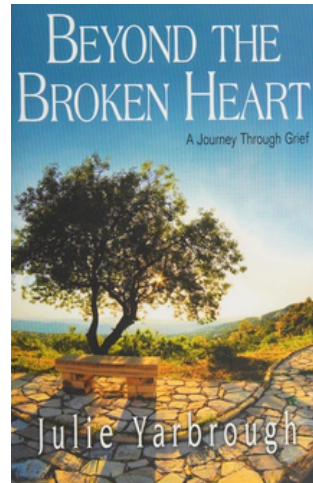
How do you understand grief when your heart is broken by the death of a loved one? To survive and live forward, those who grieve must find answers. Beyond the Broken Heart is a support group for those who are grieving the death of a loved one and are in need of a community to share the loneliness of grief. Scriptural wisdom will be used to explore the issues of grief and offer spiritual encouragement for a life of renewed hope and joy. The group will also offer some specific coping strategies to guide the way back to fullness of life. if you are grieving the death of a loved one, please join us on the journey through grief.

Starting Date: October 7th, 2026

Time: 6:30-8:00 PM

Location: Sunday School Room

For more information, contact our office at (956)381-9806



Sunday Coffee & Snacks Sign-Up

We're making a small change to our Sunday Coffee & Snacks Volunteer Sign-Up! After trying the online calendar, we've decided to return to a paper sign-up calendar to make things simpler and easier for everyone. ❤️

The new calendar will be available at the coffee/snack table each Sunday. If you'd like to help, simply choose any available Sunday and write down your name and phone number. Volunteers help by bringing a light snack to share and assisting with setting up the coffee station before service.

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered and continues to help make our Sunday mornings warm, welcoming, and a wonderful time of fellowship. We'd love to see some new names on the calendar too—every helping hand is appreciated! ☕🤝❤️

Questions?

Please contact Dora Pagel at (956) 929-1180 or dorahpagel@gmail.com

What's up with the HUB?

Hello, EFUMC Family!

We've finally reached the end of summer and are excited to kick off the fall growing season! During this last month of summer, we'll be preparing our soil and cleaning up our garden plots so we're ready for a strong start.

This season, we'll be planting peppers, beans, cucumbers, squash, and other warm-season crops. We're grateful to have made it through the intense summer heat with very few challenges and are looking forward to the cooler days ahead.

We're also selling fresh eggs every Friday for \$6 per dozen until our farmers market returns in November. Thank you all for your continued support, prayers, and encouragement. We're especially grateful that you always welcome us into your spaces, even when we come in a little dusty and a bit stinky from the farm! Your kindness means so much to us, and we're excited to continue growing alongside this wonderful community.

-Maria Gonzalez-Teran



September is Healthy Aging Month

Celebrate Healthy Aging Month with habits that boost physical health, mental health, and social connection. It's never too late to start. Adopting and maintaining a few key behaviors can help us live longer, healthier lives!

- 1. Stay Active-** Physical activity helps prevent disease and maintain a good blood flow. If you don't already exercise, try to work up to 20 minutes of moderate activity such as walking, cycling or swimming. You may also find interest in other activities such as gardening, dancing, yoga, or light strength exercises.
- 2. Maintain a Healthy Diet-** Eating a balanced diet supports energy, immunity, and overall health. Enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats, and lean proteins. Stay hydrated by drinking enough water. Limit added sugars, excessive salt, and processed foods.
- 3. Stay Social-** Social interaction helps stimulate your mind. Spend time with family, friends, and community groups. Strong relationships bring joy, support and a sense of belonging.
- 4. Practice Healthy Mental Habits-** Keep the mind active by reading, solving puzzles, or learning a new skill. You can also challenge the brain's attention and memory by playing board games or strategy games.
- 5. Get yearly Checkups-** Schedule regular health exams and medical screenings. Checking in with doctors annually, and possibly more often, may help reduce risk factors for disease. Reach out to your doctor immediately if you experience pain or any new symptoms.

Why did Moses cross the Red Sea?

To get to the other side - it was a parting gift!



Our Feathered Neighbors: Broad-winged Hawk

As we finally approach fall and (eventually!) cooler weather, we can also look forward to fall migrants coming through. In September, many hawks fly through Valley skies. The most common, sometimes in hundreds or more, is the Broad-winged Hawk. Nesting as far north as the northern USA and even southern Canada, this species migrates as far as South America. They soar on rising hot air or updrafts along mountain ranges and do not fly efficiently over large water bodies.

So the Valley is a bottleneck or funnel, where Broad-winged Hawks and some other raptors are concentrated into a small area. It's fun to see large flocks passing over, although they get really high up at times. What they mainly need are tall trees where they can roost (sleep) undisturbed. This can be in a park or refuge, or even in residential neighborhoods, so keep your eyes open!

Regards and good birding!
Tim Brush

