Thalia Devotional Guide - Lent 2024

Ash Wednesday marked the beginning of the Lenten Journey to Easter. Take advantage of the custom devotional guide that we prepared to inspire and energize your walk with Jesus. Pastor Joe worked with Deborah Mikesell, Mary Harryman, Gail Von Mosch, and Diane Kesterson to compile the devotions you submitted. Everything in this booklet has been carefully curated to enhance your devotional journey this Lent. Feel free to click the button below to download for free. We are also printing several copies for those of you who wish to have a hard copy. Just let Pastor Joe, Jazming, or one of the office angels know you would like one.
We are sad to announce that our brother in Christ, Kenneth was promoted to glory on Tuesday, February 20, 2024. Now, we give thanks to God for his life while we comfort one another in our grief. The family is planning a Memorial Service at 1:00pm on Saturday, March 16th at Thalia United Methodist Church.

Please pray for the family and all who grieve his loss.

Why Leave?

Dear Church Family,

I am finalizing a proposal for grant funding. This funding is for renewal leave next year. I plan to request up to sixteen weeks of renewal leave in the spring and summer of 2025. This funding will cover expenses for myself and the congregation. The proposal for this grant is due on March 13, 2024 and I will not know if it has been approved until the end of August. As I get ready to submit this
proposal, I want to ask for your blessing to take this time for renewal next year.

I anticipate taking renewal leave from the end of April through the middle of August in 2025, for a total of no more than sixteen weeks. We will have an interim pastor cover my responsibilities during that time. The grant will cover the compensation for the interim pastor during my leave.

Below, you will find portions of the proposal I have prepared. There are three things I want you to know right now. First, there are benefits for both the pastor and the congregation. Second, there is a sense of balance between my planned activities for rest, travel, study, service, and reflection. Finally, there is a compelling vision for what to expect as a result of renewal leave.

Benefits for the Pastor and the Congregation

Taking time for renewal will benefit the congregation by cultivating a richer understanding of the priesthood of all believers. It will also develop a deeper trust in God’s relentless purpose for the local church, which does not depend entirely on the appointed clergy. This will reignite the congregation’s passion and commitment for making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Taking intentional time for refreshment will benefit my personal wellbeing as well as my passion for following God’s call to serve in ministry. I anticipate returning with a greater sense of clarity and purpose as the pastor of Thalia UMC.

A Sense of Balance

In “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” John Wesley points to the two categories of activities that help us experience God’s grace. They are
works of piety and mercy. At Thalia, we call it devotion and kindness. I want to spend this renewal leave focusing on both devotion and kindness. I sense a deep desire for the congregation to do the same.

The activities I planned will create a framework for practicing devotion and kindness that would not be possible without this dedicated time for renewal. The outdoors have been a constant source of renewal for me throughout my life. It will be one of the primary locations for my renewal leave. Getting lost in the woods and finding my soul’s connection with God makes my heart sing. My favorite place to pray is outside under the branches, next to the water.

Furthermore, service work is at the bedrock of my calling. Administrative work in the local church makes it difficult at times to dedicate more energy to hands-on service. I will be taking time during leave to do volunteer work locally and abroad. Locally, I am going to partner with agencies like Habitat for Humanity to assist with construction and repair projects. Globally, I am going to travel to Mozambique to learn more about the collaboration between the Foundation 4 Orphans, Zoe Empowers, and the local community to serve orphans and vulnerable children through the empowerment model.

Quality time with my family is a personal treasure to me. I will take a significant portion of time during renewal leave traveling to build deeper connections with my wife and children. We will take three weeks to go to Europe and experience another culture as a family. After the trip to Europe, I will take time to simply be home and fully present with my girls (and dog).

Camping has been another cornerstone of my personal life. It is where I clearly see the connection between creation, the Creator, and the people in my life swirling together with great synergy. We will take a week in July to travel with my extended family on a
camping trip to the mountains of North Carolina. My wife and I will also take our children on two weekend trips to local campgrounds.

A Sense of Purpose

God’s steadfast love, which I experience through various means of grace, satisfies my inmost being. I want to fill up on the steadfast love of the Lord through the means of grace that make my heart sing for joy. I want to come back from renewal leave singing a new song of joy from my inmost being. I want to come back from renewal leave and hear my congregation sing a new song of joy from their inmost being. I want to join the church in singing a new song of joy as a direct result of renewal leave.

What I’m Asking

Pray for me and our church as I submit this proposal. The expectation from the organization that will approve this proposal is that the congregation understands the value of renewal leave. There are no specific guidelines or requirements to document the congregation’s approval. However, I am asking for your blessing. If you are willing to give me your blessing to pursue renewal leave, I would like to hear back from you in whatever way you see fit. Feel free to call, text, or email me. Or next time you see me in the office or in church on Sunday, you can indicate your blessing in a way that is authentic and true for you.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve with each and every one of you. It is so good to call the people of Thalia United Methodist Church my church family. Thank you for making me and my family feel at home for almost eight years!
Grace and Peace,

Pastor Joe

Leadership Business

If you want to know about the latest business of Thalia's Leadership Team, check out the unofficial business report in the link below. You will see notes about new people who are getting connected at Thalia, where we are in the Next Level Innovations process, financial updates, and ongoing projects with the facilities and grounds.

Business Report
We are now accepting donations of wrapped Easter candy (to fit in plastic eggs) AND plastic Easter eggs. Please mark your calendars for this event, Saturday,
March 23rd, from 1 to 2:30pm!!

Any questions, contact Cathy at discipleship@thaliaumc.org

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**Choir**

Choir rehearsals are at 6:30 pm in the Choir Room. We are rehearsing for the eight weeks of February in March, and sing during the 10 am service during Lent, Palm Sunday, and Easter. The choir is in need of additional members! Prayerfully consider joining us on Wednesdays and Sundays as we worship the Lord through music. Contact Leah with any questions, music@thaliaumc.org.
Count to Ten (Lyrics)

Count to ten, count to ten.
Start with 1 2 3 and say them all again.
Count to ten, count to ten.
When you start to get in trouble, count to ten.

Count to ten, count to ten.
Start with 1 2 3 and say them all again.
Count to ten, count to ten.
When you start to get in trouble, count to ten.

1. Love the Lord your God will all your heart.
2. Don't bow down to idols, that's not smart.
3. Never take the Father's name in vain.
4. Keep the Sabbath holy, six remain.
   5. Honor father and mother.
   6. Don't take the life of another.
7. Don't be a louse; be faithful to your spouse.
8. Don't take things that don't belong to you.
9. Don't say anything that is not true.
10. When you go into your neighbor's home, don't start wishing that it was your own.

That's the law God gave us long ago.
When temptation comes, it's good to know
That you can

Count to ten, count to ten.
Start with 1 2 3 and say them all again.
Count to ten, count to ten.
When you start to get in trouble, count to ten.

When you start to get in trouble on the double!
Count to ten!

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From The Ladies of Ties That Bind

The ladies would like to share that they are here working and creating items made with prayer and love, and they treasure giving them to those in need of prayer or an extra hug. If you have or know of anyone in need of a special gift, please let one of the Ties that Bind ladies know. Ties that Bind operates through your heartwarming donations! Please consider assisting the ladies with supplies
of 100% cotton fabrics and synthetic yarn. You can email Cassie Knapp, Betsy Kincaid, or Mary North and they will be glad to find a lovely gift for your loved one.

## 2024 Offering Envelopes

The 2024 Offering Envelopes are in and you can pick up your assigned envelopes from the baskets in the hall outside the sanctuary. If you do not need your envelopes because you give online or electronically, place your envelopes in the white box next to baskets. If you would like envelopes, please contact Jazming in the admin office.

**Per the IRS, charitable donations over $250 require a statement from the charity.** 2023 Contribution statements have been printed for those donors and are available for pickup outside the sanctuary. Those not picked up will be mailed. If you did not receive one and want one, please contact John Martin at finance@thaliaumc.org.

## Scholarship Announcement

Thalia United Methodist Men offer three scholarships annually. For details and to obtain an application please contact a current member of TUMM or the Church office. *The application deadline is June 1st.*
Sunday School & Bible Study March 2024

**Christian Home/Good News:**

**Meets in the Small Hall next to the kitchen.** In March, we are still in our study of James, a Shepherd's Notes Study, Chapter 3. James is considered one of the most practical books of the Bible. All are welcome!

**Faith Builders Class:**

**Meets in Room 144, Day School hallway**

The Faith Builders Class is continuing in our study of the book, Secrets of a Prayer Warrior by Derek Prince. Please come join us.

**Searchers Class:**

**Meets in the room located just off the Social Hall**

In March, the Searchers will continue our study and discussions on faith and doubt. We're reading 24 (3 each week) questions answered by Christian writer Philip Yancy, and related scriptures. We have discovered that the Bible contains many high-profile doubters, including Moses, Abraham, Gideon, and Peter and that reading scripture, praying and gathering with our fellow believers are good ways to help us in our low points. Please join us.

**Seekers Class:**

**Meets in Room B8, Day School Hallway**

The Seekers Class will begin our spring quarter with the theme “Encounters in Prayer and Love”.

Our first five lessons take us inside the story of Jesus as he moves toward the cross, particularly looking at Jesus’ prayers during this time, including his prayer for his disciples, his prayer for the church, and his anguished prayer in the garden. With our hope of resurrection fresh in our hearts, our last eight lessons take us into a vision for peace, reconciliation, and healing in our fractured and polarized world. Please come and join us.

**Women’s Bible Study:**
**Meets Tuesdays 7-9 PM or Wednesdays 9:30-11:30 AM** Our next book is Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus. We will begin this 14-chapter study in March. We would love you to join us on Tuesday @7pm or Wednesday at 9:30am. Contact Lois if you would like more information 757.651.6600 or email lois.grubb@gmail.com

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**Financial Positions**

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*Our catch-up 2023 apportionment payment brought us up to 77% for 2023*
Birthdays
Catherine Abbott (03/01)
John Martin (03/01)
Casie Duerr (03/02)
Sharon Balog (03/03)
Katie Blanks (03/08)
Jonathan Fugere (03/08)
Daniel Grubb (03/08)
Marley Ferguson (03/09)
Ruth Cott (03/12)
Linda Lowrance (03/12)
Jerrod Ragsdale (03/12)
Mark Redden (03/12)
Darlene Wilburn (03/12)
Sandra Bailey (03/14)
Matthew Brown (03/14)

Birthdays
Robert Moran (03/15)
Joyce Yeich (03/16)
John Brister (03/19)
Benjamin Kohler (03/19)
Carl Von Mosch (03/19)
Emma Foster (03/20)
Dennis Shultis (03/22)
Jennifer Ramos (03/23)
Steven Finlayson (03/24)
Thea Griffin (03/25)
Bob Philcrantz (03/25)
Jamie Knapp (03/26)
James Ruesch (03/26)
Katie Liszka (03/27)
Remy Sensense (03/29)
Diane Kesterson (03/30)

Anniverseraries
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.