

March 3, 2024



Origin of Alexandria

NRS John 3:1 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews.² He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God."³ Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above."⁴ Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?"⁵ Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.'⁸ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."⁹ Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?"¹⁰ Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"¹¹ "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony."¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?

Let me introduce you to Origen, African by birth, and one of the church's earliest and most brilliant theologians. Born into a Christian family in 185 AD, he acquired a classical Greek education. He practiced fasting and thrice daily prayers and was known for both his genius and his piety. He taught in Alexandria's Catechetical School and balanced his teaching with

practices of almsgiving and visiting prisoners in jail. He died around 251 AD.

Origen, a complex character, inspired his students and influenced his enemies. Origen's teaching methods included allegorical methods that he deepened both in theory and practice. He acknowledged that scripture possessed a literal and historical meaning but that these interpretations were only for *simple believers and simpler minds*, those whose spiritual maturity were not able to grasp the Word's deeper dimensions. The deeper dimension was allegory, a form the Gospel writers borrowed from Greek literary theory, of *speaking one thing and signifying something other than what was literally said*. At the Catechetical School, an early seminary, serious followers of Jesus' Way learned to push beyond the literal and mine the scriptures for their deeper spiritual meanings.

Origen believed that literal readings, while acceptable for ordinary Christians, posed a serious problem for the church: skeptics and intellectuals, he wrote, would easily see the contradictions of scripture, thus causing them to reject the gospel or fall into heresy. Literalism, Origen maintained, far from making Christ plainly visible, acted as an obstacle to Christianity by raising unnecessary questions about God's truth.

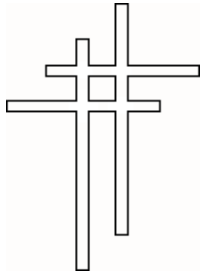
The mystical meanings entailed seeking out the *heavenly things* of which the literal words serve only as a pattern or a shadow. For Origen, reading scripture was a search for the wisdom hidden under the literal words. I, too was trained in this way of understanding scripture; that is why I always invite our congregation to listen *for the word of God, not to the word of God*. Origen taught others who passed this approach to Biblical study along to others who would one day teach me. They taught that the Christian allegorist looks for truth within and behind the text, always seeking Christ, *the living word breathing through the scripture*. To Origen and all other allegorists, the Word is always more than and greater than mere words.

Shalom,
Jim Sprouse

Please Celebrate Sunday's Message

Huguenot United Methodist Church is inviting you to our Sunday Morning Worship Service. This in-person service begins at 11 a.m. Please join us and take part in our worship and praise of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Pastor Jim Sprouse will provide us with the message



"Promises"

We hope you will join us!

HUMC Nursery

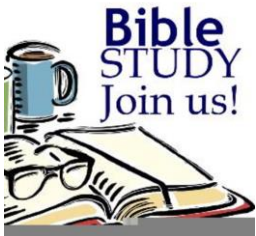


Our nursery caregivers, Rosalie Koch and Lena Cosmo, are at church every Sunday and ready to welcome infant and toddler children in the nursery during worship from 10:45 a.m. until

12:15 p.m. Rosalie and a volunteer provide childcare from 9:45 a.m. until 10:45 a.m.

Adult Bible Study / Sunday School

Our Adult Bible Study/Sunday School class begins at 10 a.m. Our class meets in the Fellowship Hall. The title of our lesson for Sunday, March 3, is "Jesus Dinner Prayer." The focal passage is Matthew 26: 26-30. The background text is Matthew 26. The purpose statement is "To discover how the use of established liturgy can help us pray in difficult times."



We look forward to your participation in our class. If you have any questions, comments, or feedback regarding our HUMC Adult Bible Study please do not hesitate to contact me.

Gerry Flinchbaugh 804.314.4817 gflinchb@gmail.com

THE UPPER ROOM
DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Where the World Meets to Pray

Copies of the **March and April** edition of The Upper Room are now available on the greeting table at the front entrance. Please consider making a donation in the labeled box.

Please Join US

Coffee Fellowship: THIS Sunday, March 3

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall after our 11 o'clock worship service, for our **Coffee Fellowship THIS Sunday, March 3**, for coffee, some light snacks and great conversations. We invite our visitors to join us for coffee fellowship, so we can answer their questions about HUMC and we can get to know them better. During today's Coffee Fellowship following worship, the children in the congregation are invited to create cards for our homebound members. **See you there!**



Would you like to host an upcoming Coffee Fellowship? We have scheduled our Coffee Fellowships for the first Sunday of each month. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board across

from the Fellowship Hall to be a future Coffee Fellowship host.



Sharing God's Love in Shoe Boxes

Last Lenten season, our congregation prepared gifts in shoe boxes for Armenian children and we would like to do that again this year. The Project Agape Armenia distributes the gifts to children in need. Supporting children who have very little material possessions is an unexpected gift of love. It gladdens the heart of the child and warms the hearts of the parents. Doesn't this reaction greatly increase the value of our gifts?

The boxes, with lists for items that are needed for each box, will be available **Sunday, March 3**, in the entrance of the church. Please return the boxes to the church by the end of Lent. There is a large box in the hall that is labeled Project Agape Armenia in which the completed boxes can be returned. The items that are suggested are appropriate for the designated age of the child. You can choose from the list the items that you need to fill your box. The cost to ship the box to Armenia is \$5.00 and if you can include this with your box, it would be most appreciated.



Thank you for helping to spread God's love.

Sarah Coffey

Bedding Needed for Armenia

In a recent Sunday School class we talked about the humility of Jesus as He was crucified on the cross. It reminded me as I try to live in the kingdom of God, how I need (and maybe all of us need) to practice a great deal more humility. This Lenten and Easter Season, we at HUMC have the opportunity to live out our humility by helping people in Armenia. Brian Mateer, Director of Missions at Western N.C. Methodist Churches, spoke to the Wednesday Night Fellowship about the church program that he supports in Armenia. In Armenia, approximately 26% of the people live below the poverty



level. Also, there is much tension in the country because the countries around them always want their land and often try to take land by force. Many lives are in a state of uncertainty. Right now, there is a large influx of Russian refugees who are fleeing Putin and his tyranny. Armenia is a Christian country, so the churches are helping with the refugees that are coming to Armenia and it has been draining their resources. They are trying to furnish basic sleeping and shelter arrangements and they particularly need funds for bedding items like sheets, towels, mattresses, etc. They are asking for monetary donations to purchase the needed items and this would help to boost their economy.

This Lenten Season, can we think about practicing our humility by giving our gifts to Armenia in secret, to people who will never know of your help? Doesn't it make you glad when you think that Jesus will be pleased with your efforts?

Sarah Coffey



Wednesday Night Fellowship

Wednesday Potluck Fellowship Dinners are on the second Wednesday of each month. Bring a dish to share and fellowship with your church family and friends. Please come early / stay late if you can assist. Many hands make light work.

Please join us on Wednesday, March 13, at 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

I am the church, you are the church, we are the church together.

Contact Shirley Bradshaw with questions or suggestions.

Sbrads2321@gmail.com

804-240-1240

Fry-Day Night Lenten Fish Fry

The St. Edwards Knights of Columbus are sponsoring their annual Lenten dinner. The dinner consists of baked salmon or fried catfish, baked potato or French fries, green beans, coleslaw or salad and a drink. Takeout is also available.

Time: 5-7 p.m. each Friday from through March 22.

Stations of the Cross available in the St. Edwards sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. each Friday during Lent.



Mission Opportunity

Several years ago, Judy Smith presented an idea to our Huguenot United Women in Faith group. Each year we put together Birthday Kits for the Bainbridge Food Pantry. They are very much appreciated by the recipients of the food pantry. These kits consist of birthday plates and napkins, a table covering, 2 square cake pans or one rectangular pan, cake mix and icing, candles and a birthday card. They are put into a large (2.5 gallon) slider storage bag. Since last month was my birthday month I have put several birthday kits together for our Blessing Box. This might be a wonderful opportunity for families to shop and put together when it is a family member's birthday. This weekend we will have a couple of Birthday Kits put together to display on the desk as we enter our church foyer.



Hope you will take a look.

Judith Westerhouse and the Mission Team

Preschool Pizza Fundraiser

Our preschool has an ongoing fundraiser with Marco's Pizza. Just use the code: **HUMCPSAF** when ordering over the phone or online and the school receives a portion from each sale all year long. Participating locations include the Marco's Pizza on Sheila Lane and on Midlothian Turnpike.



CALLING ALL BELL RINGERS:

Joanne Barreca, choir member, is organizing a group to once again play bells! Many of you are experienced bell ringers or have indicated an interest in this. Please let Joanne know if you are interested, how many bells you are comfortable ringing in one song, and any preference as to treble or bass. Joanne's e-mail is jlbarreca@yahoo.com. The first date for playing will be in the Spring.



Connie Salmeri
Director of Music

Make a Joyful Noise!

Choir practice has resumed! New members (or those who might be interested) are **WELCOME!** We meet each Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the Choir Room. Please contact Connie Salmeri with any questions. (804) 314-6308



Joy of Crafts has gotten off to a lively start in 2024 with a steady stream of donations to the group From the Heart, a sort of clearinghouse for comfort items to nursing homes, hospitals, dialysis centers and shelters. We have donated fleece hats, mittens, scarves, wheelchair totes, chemo port shirts, drain bags, clothing protectors, neck pillows and dresses for needy girls around the world. We are able to buy the supplies for all these projects thanks to your support of our holiday bazaar last year. Thank you!

If you are interested in participating in this program, contact Molly Sprouse at mollysprouse@gmail.com.



LENT

Blessing Box Update

Friends, an update on our community Blessing Box. It is being used!! We are delighted that it is being utilized but saddened that there is such a need in our community. The Missions team understands that we are all “pulled” in many different directions and being asked for donations from one charity to another. We do not want our congregation to feel as though they need to support all of these activities. We are, hopefully providing opportunities. The idea behind the Blessing Box was that it would be supported by our church but also our nearby community. We will need to work on letting our nearby community know of this opportunity.



There are many ways to be involved in missions at Huguenot Church; i.e. Joy of Crafts, Friends of the Homeless, Rise Against Hunger, preschool outreach, UMCOR, Bainbridge Community food pantry and now the Blessing Box. We hope you will choose what speaks to your heart. We do not want anyone in our community to feel the “pressure” of supporting every mission.

If you have an idea for a mission that you think Huguenot should get involved in that you would be pleased to initiate, we would be very happy to hear about it. As mentioned in the Missions Meeting article, we will meet on Tuesday, February 27 at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Please come and share your thoughts.

For your information, the items utilized from our Blessing Box in the past two weeks: Toilet paper, napkins, paper plates, individually wrapped plastic flatware, bar soap, all types of vegetables, hearty soups, cream of mushroom soup, canned chicken, chicken dumplings, tuna fish, boxed cereal, shelf milk (small containers, as well as, quart sized), 10 oz sized apple juice, small water bottles, blueberry and banana muffin mix, instant mashed potatoes, anything with pop tops, canned fruit, condiments, all spices, ketchup, mayo, mustard, jelly etc.



Thank you to all for your support of Huguenot and our missions program.

HUMC Missions team



Happy Birthday to

Aaron Lowery (March 1)
Derek Podolny (March 8)

If we missed your birthday or anniversary, please call, leave a note or send an email to Elaine so she can include you!



Nick Anderson

Carmen Hoge

Kari

Linda Smith

In an effort to keep the prayer requests current, names posted will be removed after 30 days unless requested otherwise.

Newsletter News

If you have an article for the next *pulse* newsletter, please email it to Elaine **by Wednesday at 10 a.m.**

Please know that submitted articles may be edited to provide clarity and increased inclusion.



Note: This newsletter and the Sunday Bulletin are posted on the church website by Friday evening.

Church Office Hours:

Pastor Jim is in the office on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Elaine is in the office each Wednesday and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. These hours are subject to change on occasion. (FYI – Elaine’s hours may continue to vary as she supports family needs. She is checking voicemails and email and will respond to requests for assistance as soon as possible.)



Sunday, March 3 – Third Sunday in Lent

10 a.m...Adult Bible Study/Sunday School (FH)
11 a.m...Worship and Communion
12 p.m...Coffee Fellowship following service (FH)

Wed., March 6

10 a.m...Preschool Tour for Parents
7 p.m...Choir Practice (CR)

Thursday, March 7

10 a.m...Women’s Bible Study (FH)

Friday, March 8

9 a.m...Library Work Session (L)
10 a.m...Feed the Homeless (K) *All are welcome!*

Sunday, March 10 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

10 a.m...Adult Bible Study/Sunday School (FH)
11 a.m...Worship
12 p.m...Puppets in Praise & Service practice (PR)

CR – Choir Room **FH** – Fellowship Hall
K – Kitchen **L** – Library **PR** – Puppet Room



- Tues., March 12 – United Women in Faith Mtg. @ 10:30 a.m.
- Wed., March 13 – Pot Luck Fellowship Dinner @ 6 p.m.
- Wed., March 20 – Preschool Staff Meeting @ 5:30 p.m.
- Thurs., March 21 – Preschool Staff Meeting @ 9 a.m.
- Fri., March 22 – Preschool Closed for Professional Development

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