

Life at Cokesbury

October 28 - November 3, 2019

Calendar

- Joan will be out of the office on Tuesday.
- Don't forget to set your clocks back an hour Saturday night before going to bed!
- November 3 is All Saints Sunday.

Prime Timers - By Kay Dumas

The Prime Timers enjoyed their meeting on Friday, October 18. Linda Horne had a meaningful devotion entitled *Children Learn What They Live*. They had updates on all nursing home and homebound members and will remember them at Christmas. They planned for the leftover soup to be frozen and to be delivered to sick church members. They made plans for the holidays. During the month of November, they will sponsor a Coat Drive. The coats will be delivered to Crisis Assistance and Samaritan House on November 25. They will also furnish a Thanksgiving meal for a needy family. For Christmas, they will continue to give gift bags for Room In the Inn guests. If you have not signed up to furnish an item, call Kay Dumas. (The next Prime Timer meeting will be Thursday, December 5.)

Blessing of the Animals - By Jo Walters

Our Blessing of the Animals provided a chance to meet furry members of our congregation not normally present, as well as some from the community. Hopefully, this sweet service can be an annual event. Many thanks to Matthews Animal Clinic, Pet in the City, Harris Teeter, Target, Dan & Kay Dumas, and especially, the White family.

UMW Bake Sale - By Kay Dumas

Once again the UMW will sponsor a Thanksgiving Bake Sale. To prepare for the sale, we need to volunteer to bake our favorite baked item and list it on the sheet in the narthex or at your Circle meeting. The lists should be returned to Kay Dumas by November 5, so the donated list with prices, can be posted by November 10 and ready to be purchased on November 24 ready for Thanksgiving dinner.

Stewardship Sunday

On Sunday, October 27, everyone in attendance will have an opportunity to fill out a "pledge card" (we tried to come up with a better name, but alas this is the best we could do). Those pledge cards include not only a plan for financial giving for 2020, but also a place to commit to sharing ideas and dreams for the church with your pastor and church leadership. As you prepare for worship this coming Sunday, consider faithfully what you believe God is calling you to give to Cokesbury. It is our prayer that as we all discern what God is calling individuals to give, it will also become more apparent how deeply God is calling us to give as a congregation. Those who do not, for whatever reason, turn in a pledge card will get one in the mail and will be invited to fill it out and return it to the church so that we can continue the work of understanding where God is leading our congregation.

All Saints Sunday

On November 3, our worship will include remembering those members of the Cokesbury congregation who have died in the last year, but it will also include a remembrance of all of those whose faithful lives taught us the faith too.

From the Pastor

I used to hate church stewardship campaigns. I've never been a fan of fundraising. It feels too transactional, like we all get weirded out by thinking of the church's strength in terms of a combination of financial stability (or not) and the number of humans participating (or not). On bad days, I only got as far as knowing that that wasn't right but seldom got around to thinking about how I would do things differently. In a moment of clarity I was taught that my perspective was wrong – giving to the church and holy fundraising aren't about the transactional exchange of funds, but about the spiritual willingness to give ourselves over to God.

Early on after I got appointed to Cokesbury, we had to think about our annual “Stewardship Sunday” or “Pledge Sunday”. Many conversations involved how to simplify the way we operate, which was also a refreshing way to consider our message for giving. It's really a simple question: What is God asking you to give to Cokesbury? I believe that our giving is how we say yes to God's intentions. Our giving is how we declare that we are willing to seek and follow God's vision for us.

That doesn't mean that our leaders – friends who deserve our gratitude for this service – will always have perfect understanding of God's intentions, nor does it mean that we won't fail sometimes. It might become even more imperative for us to share our ideas and visions with those in leadership, so that our giving includes more than just financial giving, but also our time, service, and witness. Our commitment to give in 2020 simply states that we are eager to go where Christ leads and to contribute to the vision the Holy Spirit reveals to us, no matter what.

On Sunday, October 27, everyone will have a chance to state what we believe God is calling us to give to Cokesbury, an outpost of God's kingdom on Idlewild Road. This question is as much about individuals' needs to give as it is part of our discernment of what God is calling us to be as a congregation. For example, if God is calling us to a courageous vision, then God will call individuals to give courageously. But we can't let ourselves merely evaluate the size of God's vision for us by the dollar amount pledged. The size of God's vision has to be understood in terms of faith and courage, not dollars alone. Our treasure will always be where our heart is also, but hopefully our hearts and lives will always be the more perfect offering.

Grace,
Jonathan