



the **New Covenant**

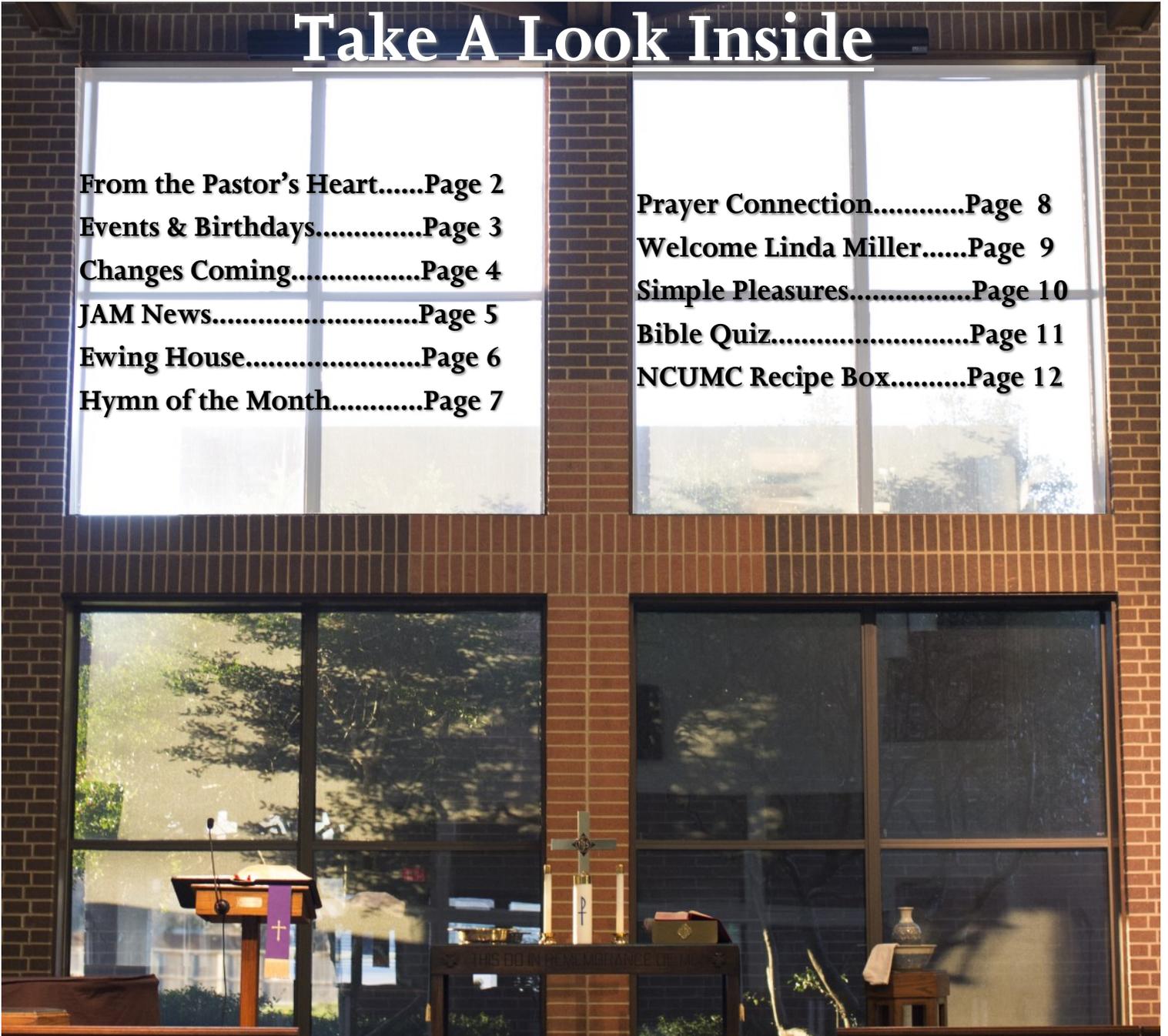
February 2020
1st Quarter Edition

Window

Take A Look Inside

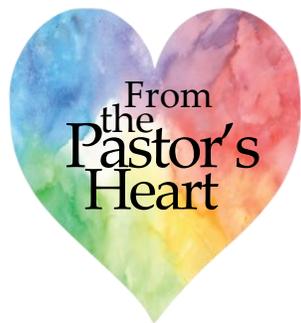
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Sharing God through love and service.

To Reconcile



I have received a number of questions about what it means to be a “reconciling church” and what it does not mean. I have also been told about some misinformation that is circulating. So I sincerely hope that you will all read this article to its conclusion.

Reconciling Ministries has as its vision the full inclusion of persons into the United Methodist Church regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ability (a reference to ‘dis’abilities), race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status as a faithful response to our shared baptismal vows to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves. It does not mean that we will start holding same sex weddings next month. Yes, the focus of this group is on the full inclusion of persons who identify as LGBTQ+ but at its heart, it is an extension of a ministry of inclusion that has been fought for throughout the, sometimes dark, history of our church. We have fought for the full inclusion of ethnic minorities and women. And despite the great progress

made, there is still work left to be done for *full* inclusion of ethnic minorities and women.

As United Methodists, our Book of Discipline contains a section dedicated to ‘Social Principle’s’. Though not considered church ‘law’, these principles highlight our Christian responsibilities in and to (1) the natural world, (2) the nurturing community, (3) the social community, (4) the economic community, (5) the political community, and (6) the world community. We do not live in a bubble or vacuum. Rather we live in and thus have responsibilities in a family, church, local, city, state, national, and world community. This section of the Discipline concludes with our Social Creed:

We believe in God, Creator of the world; and in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of creation. We believe in the Holy Spirit, through whom we acknowledge God’s gifts, and we repent of our sin in misusing these gifts to idolatrous ends.

We affirm the natural world as God’s handiwork and dedicate ourselves to its preservation, enhancement, and faithful use by humankind.

We joyfully receive for ourselves and others the blessings of community, sexuality, marriage, and the family.

We commit ourselves to the rights of men, women, children, youth, young adults, the aging, and people with disabilities; to improvement of the quality of life; and to the rights and dignity of all persons.

We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the glory of God and the good of themselves and others and in the protection of their welfare in so doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress.

We dedicate ourselves to peace throughout the world, to the rule of justice and law among nations, and to individual freedom for all people of the world.

We believe in the present and final triumph of God’s Word in human affairs and gladly accept our commission to manifest the life of the gospel in the world. Amen.

To my knowledge, this is unique to what it means to be the people called ‘Methodists’. To reconcile means to restore a relationship or to cause to exist in harmony. Our LGBTQ+ siblings have been excluded and harmed when categorized as “incompatible with Christian teaching,” grounded in (if we *realllllyyy* stretch our interpretations) to no more than 10 verses out of the 31,102 verses in the Bible (23,145 Old Testament and 7,957 New Testament). And legitimate arguments can be made (doesn’t mean you have to agree with the argument for it to have value or scholarly legitimacy) that none of these verses are about loving, committed relationships between equally yoked adult persons.

So why do we need to become ‘reconciling’ right now? Why not just wait for General Conference to sort it all out and just roll with the flow? First, our baptismal vows do not say to “take the easiest path and roll with the flow, don’t make waves, just get by without any risk to yourselves.” Our Social Principles **and** scripture calls us to action: **do** justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. To do nothing, to wait for the easiest path of least resistance is to proclaim that, while of course everyone is welcome here, it is only so long and so far as we are comfortable and at ease...just don’t cause us to stretch our understanding or to grow.

Brothers, sisters, siblings: we claim reconciliation in Christ for ourselves. But to be reconciled in Christ is not just an affirmation of faith or a set of beliefs. It is a way of living and being in the world. We cannot fully claim reconciliation for ourselves as long as we exclude or turn away when others exclude anyone from the family of God.

If you have made it this far, know that each and every one of you has become precious and beloved to me in our time together. It is my great desire that whatever the future holds for our cherished UMC, you and I as New Covenant will be walking together.

Blessings,
Pastor Dana

February 2 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Souper Bowl for Caring Sunday What the Bible Says About Homosexuality & More Study Fresh Start Worship Service
February 3 11:30 am - 12:30 pm	Ladies Luncheon
February 4 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm	What the Bible Says About Homosexuality & More Study
February 5 5:45 pm - 6:15 pm	Pray It Forward
February 6 9:00 am - 11:00 am 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	What the Bible Says About Homosexuality & More Study Fellowship & Games
February 7 - 9	Mid-Winter 2
February 8 9:00 am - 11:00 am	All Church Meeting: Development of Reconciling Statement
February 9 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Scouting Sunday JAM Group JAM Missions Fresh Start Worship Service

Events at New Covenant UMC

February 10 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Missions Meeting
February 13 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Fellowship & Games
February 15 5:00 pm - 8:30 pm	Parent's Night Out
February 16 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Fresh Start Worship Service
February 19 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm	Ewing House
February 20 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Fellowship & Games Sew Whats
February 22 9:00 am - 10:00 am	All Church Meeting: Reconciling Vote
February 23 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm 4:30 pm - 5:00 pm 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	JAM Group JAM Choir Practice Fresh Start Worship Service
February 26 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Ash Wednesday Service Break-Fast
February 27 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Fellowship & Games

- 4: Brandon Reed
- 5: Barbara Anderson
Kylie Tacker
- 19: Phyllis Polston
Patricia Gbaya
- 24: Verna Smith
- 26: Susan Kovan

Pray It Forward!

Next meeting is March 4th.

UPDATE: Meetings will be held the 1st Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm in Hallowed Grounds.

Please send all prayer requests & celebrations to
Cindy Wolfe via email: maytag9713@sbcglobal.net or text: 214-315-9992.
You can also see Linda Easton or Cindy Wolfe during services.



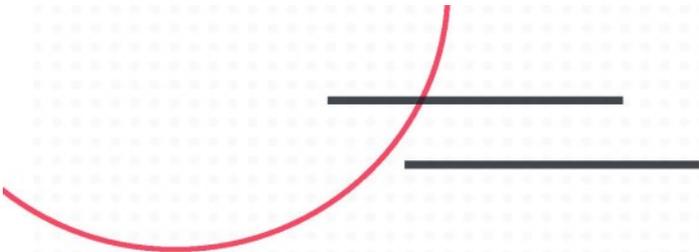
A New Format for *The Window*

New Covenant's newsletter, *The Window*, will have a slightly different presentation plan during 2020. Although it will continue to hit your inbox on a monthly basis, the heftiness of its content that you are used to seeing will be limited to a quarterly timetable.

For eight months out of the year, you will receive issues containing information about up-coming church activities and current news items – including the monthly calendar, events & birthdays, words from the pastor, maybe a recipe and a short article. These issues will be perhaps 2-3 pages in length.

During the months of *February, May, August* and *November*, *The Window* will be more robust in its offerings, including such items as articles of personal testaments, individual experiences or opinions relevant to church and spiritual life. It should be reiterated that it is in these quarterly issues where everyone in the congregation is enthusiastically invited to participate in sharing their thoughts, feelings and perspectives with our New Covenant brothers and sisters. These are the issues where we have the opportunity for deeper levels of communication among ourselves.

Thank you for your support of *The Window* and the connectedness it allows in our individual journeys with God.



JAM FEBRUARY

Events

February 7-9 Midwinter 2

February 9: JAM Group 3:30-4:30 pm

JAM Missions 4:30-5:30pm

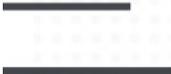
February 15: Parents Night Out 5:00pm - 8:30pm

February 23: JAM Group 3:30pm - 4:30pm

JAM Choir Practice 4:30 pm - 5:00pm

ANNOUNCEMENTS

If your youth is planning to attend either summer camp or the mission trip please let us know asap. We need to pay the initial deposits to reserve the spaces for both events.



Dates

Mission Trip (ages 12 and up): June 21 – 27

Bridgeport Jr. High: June 15-19 or July 13-17

Bridgeport Sr. High: June 29th - July 3rd

Summer Camp deposit is \$50

The mission trip deposit is \$60 January/February

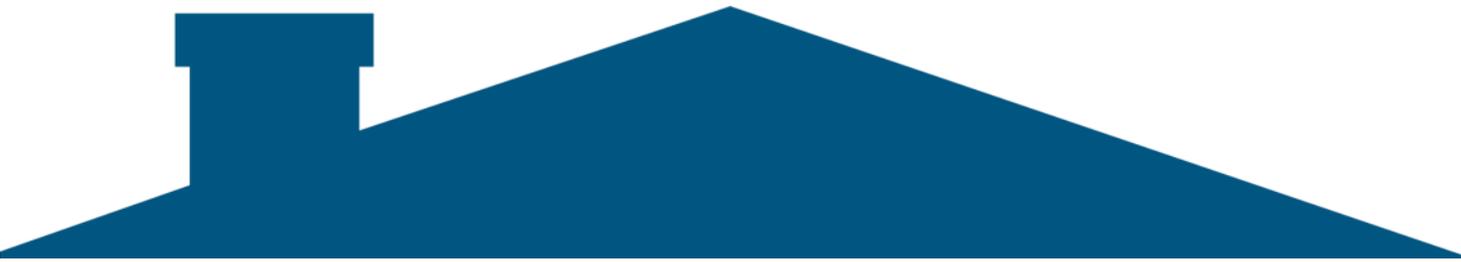


Birthdays

Anna Norton - January 20th

Patricia Gbaya - February 19th





Home to over 300+ men, women, families and children, AIDS Services of Dallas (ASD) provides housing and support services for individuals and families living with or impacted by HIV/AIDS.

New Covenant's ministry at Ewing House is 19 years old and it is a strong ministry. A home cooked (most of the time) supper is served on the 3rd Wednesday night of each month and a brunch is served every Christmas Eve morning. We really could use a few more volunteers to help prepare meals and/or go to Ewing House to help serve meals.

Please be in prayer about this ministry and contact Kathleen Skelton or Linda Easton to volunteer.

Blessings on the Missions of our church.

Linda Easton
214-707-3014

Kathleen Skelton
214-532-6128

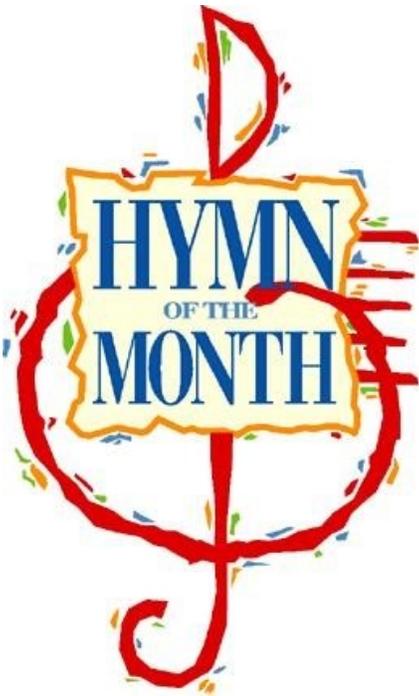
As all of you know that Jean Miller, Sharon Smith, and John Elfers for the last 20 years or so have given their time every Sunday morning to conduct worship services at the Waterford Retirement Center in Mesquite. They are ready for a little change and we are in need of some volunteers. We need speakers for the first Sunday of each month and Worship Leaders for the first, third and fifth Sundays of each month. We also need volunteers who play the piano or perhaps another musical instrument such as a guitar etc to accompany the congregation as they sing their hymns.

This ministry is so important in the lives of the Waterford residents and they look forward to their Sunday services. Please pray about this ministry and please consider joining us to help support it.

“God Will Take Care of You”

By John Elfers

*Be not dismayed whate'er betide, God will take care of you,
Beneath his wings of love abide, God will take care of you.*



The verses of this hymn are a fitting message for a new year and a new decade. *God will take care of you*, hymn #130, is a popular selection of the participants of the Waterford Chapel service.

God will take care of you was written by Civilla Durfee Martin, a schoolteacher, and her husband, Walter Stillman Martin, a Baptist preacher, while they were visiting the Practical Bible Training School in Lestershire, New York. Reverend W. Stillman Martin was invited to preach, but Mrs. Martin became ill and was unable to join him. When Rev. Martin was considering cancelling his speaking, his young son implored him, “Don’t you think if God wants you to speak today, He will take care of Mother while you are away?” Rev. Martin went on to preach while Civilla Martin composed the hymn’s words that Sunday afternoon and her husband set them to music when he came home. He received help from two other teachers that evening and the song was printed in a songbook compiled for the school in 1905.

Civilla Martin also wrote the text of the hymn, *His Eye is on the Sparrow*, which was set to music by the well-known hymn writer, Charles Gabriel.

The message of this hymn resonates throughout the psalms. God would continue to watch over Israel just as He had seen the Israelites through their way out of Egypt into the Promised Land. Consider Psalm 139: 9-10: “If I rise on the wings of the dawn, If I settle on the far side of the sea; Even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.” The Lord would see Israel through its exile from Jerusalem. Jesus evokes this message, also: “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.” (Matt. 6:34). The writer of I Peter echoes this message, also: “Cast all your care upon Him because He cares for you.” I Peter 5:7.

The other verses of this hymn provide inspiration for prayer and meditation as we start a new year:

*Through days of toil when heart doth fail, God will take care of you!
When dangers fierce your path assail, God will take care of you!*

*All you may need He will provide, God will take care of you!
Trust Him, and you will be satisfied, God will take care of you!*

*Lonely and sad, from friends apart, God will take care of you!
He will give peace to your aching heart, God will take care of you!*

*No matter what may be the test, God will take care of you!
Lean, weary one, upon His breast, God will take care of you!*

Our Prayer / Worship Connection

I have had the privilege of serving the Worship Committee for several years. As we changed leadership in 2020, I have rotated off. This change has caused me to reflect on my worship experience in a completely different way. When serving in worship I not only had insight into weekly worship but assisted in the planning of the services including message series, scripture references and music selections. This gave me a unique perspective when I entered the sanctuary on Sunday mornings. I was acutely in-tune to all the “details” of the service and this sometimes interrupted my ability to focus on what mattered and compromised my personal worship experience to a small degree. So, I was looking forward to just “being” in worship. I mean I was planning on sitting down in the sanctuary waiting to be “fed”.

After the first few Sundays of the new year, I quickly realized that something was missing. I was no longer privy to the “insight” I had previously shared. Then I thought about all of you that come to worship each week. You each come to worship and hear God’s word with little foreknowledge of the context. What if we all had that information ahead of time?

This thought led me to thoughts of prayer. We all know prayer and worship are intimately connected. What if “we”, as a community of faith, not only read the scripture, but meditated and prayed over it. We might pray for our Pastor to receive the message that God would have her present. We might pray for the worship participants; for the music; our own enlightenment and enrichment from the Word; for others to receive their own personal message and Word for the week.

I firmly believe that worship would take on a whole different feel and meaning if we all were connected through prayer for our worship. We would surely hear the message differently. The music might touch us more deeply. The Word might fill us more fully.

So, watch for a new section in our bulletin entitled “Next Week’s Word”. It will be listed in the announcements section and will detail the scripture reference and message title for the following Sunday. I encourage you to read the references before you come to Sunday worship. I challenge you to even meditate and pray over it. Let’s see what God has in store for us through our deliberate focus on weekly worship.

Peace be with you.

Your Sister in Christ,
Cindy Wolfe

A Warm Welcome

Linda Miller became an official member of the New Covenant UMC family on January 19, 2020. She transitioned her membership from the Church of England after attending New Covenant for several months.

Linda is a civil engineer who graduated with her bachelor degree from West Point, and earned her master's at U. of California. She then served as a captain in the Army, where she piloted helicopters and met her husband, Brian, also an engineer. She eventually began working at Bechtel Engineering, which was her launching point for becoming a supervising engineer on major tunneling projects around the world – Boston's Central Artery (161-miles!), Seattle's Monorail, and projects in Australia and the UK. She is now based in Dallas, working as director of infrastructure construction for the Dallas-to-Houston High-Speed-Rail project.

"I feel most comfortable working outside wearing a hard-hat" she said.

Her latest placement is unfortunately putting unwanted distance between Linda and Brian. He, too, is a civil engineer, and is currently stationed out of the country. They don't like the time apart, but it sometimes comes with their lifestyles. They have two grown sons, Luke and Jacob.

For the last ten years, Linda has been close friends with Sandra Crane, who also lives in London. After she was assigned the job in Dallas, Linda was urged by Sandra to get in contact with her mother and sister back home, Virginia and Teri. That introduction has evolved into a solid friendship as well, and they eventually invited her to join them at church.

"After I came to church with them the first time", Linda said, *"I knew this was going to be my new church home. The warm feeling of inclusion I've received here has been tremendous."*

Linda – when she has not had to work on Sunday – attends the adult Sunday school class *"below the stairs"* (Journey), and has been thinking about how she might best serve God in this church that she has now adopted. Her faith is strong, her spirit is vibrant, and she obviously puts her heart fully into whatever calling she decides to follow.



Linda, Luke, Jacob & Brian Miller

I have no doubt you will enjoy getting to know her.

Simple Pleasures of Life

By Jim Handy

God has provided me with many simple pleasures in daily living. If I'm paying attention to what's going on around me, almost everything I encounter has the potential to morph into a simple pleasure.

- ~ Watching a really skilled retail clerk work at handling people.
- ~ Waking from a restful sleep, when I can remember some of the dream I was having, and enough time to ponder its crazy details.
- ~ Reading a well-crafted novel.
- ~ Petting my dog, especially behind the ears, which makes her smile.
- ~ Saying something funny enough that someone laughs out loud.
- ~ Talking with close friends and loved ones.

I take pleasure in watching instances of what I'll call Jesus Love – acts of kindness and integrity that supersede the requirements of politeness. I come across lots of these with the people at my church, but they are also prevalent in many other places.

I was wheel-chairing the other day from my van to Starbucks when a UPS driver stopped his truck and climbed down the truck steps.

“How's it going?” I asked as I passed.

“Hey, it's another beautiful day”, he said. “Sun's out, temperature is 60. Maybe it's a cliché but a day like this makes a big difference on a job like this. It is a blessed day”.

“Amen, brother”, I tossed back. A day of beautiful weather helps all of us, and understanding how someone else is boosted by a simple pleasure can – in itself – become a simple pleasure of my own. That's where God's gift of empathy comes into play.

He puts the beauty out there and I'm responsible for determining how it's valued. And for thanking Him.



BIBLE QUIZ

THE _____ OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF _____.
Proverbs 1:7

THE _____ OF MONEY IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL.
1 Timothy 6:10

DON'T BE WISE IN YOUR OWN _____
Proverbs 3:7

THE PATH OF THE UNGODLY IS _____
Proverbs 4:19

WHICH INSECT IS COMPARABLE TO THE LAZY MAN? _____
Proverbs 6:6

WHAT DID NOAH PLANT? _____
Genesis 9:20

WHO PERSECUTE THE POOR? _____
PSALM 10:2

NO WORK , THEN YOU SHOULD NOT _____
2 Thess. 3:10

_____ WILL BE JUDGED WITH GREATER STRICTNESS
James 3:1

_____ TRIUMPHS OVER JUDGMENT
James 2:13

Italian Beef and Spinach Meatballs

PREP TIME:15 mins | COOK TIME:25 mins | TOTAL TIME:40 mins

From Skinnytaste: <https://www.skinnytaste.com/skinny-italian-spinach-meatballs/>

Ingredients:

- * 2 slices whole wheat light bread
(or gluten-free bread)
- * 1 lb 93% lean ground beef
- * 1 tbsp olive oil
- * 10 oz frozen chopped spinach
(thawed and squeezed of all liquid)
- * 1 large egg
- * 1 clove garlic (minced)
- * 2 tbsp fresh parsley
- * 1/2 cup Pecorino Romano cheese
(or your favorite Parmesan Cheese)
- * salt and pepper

Tomato Sauce:

- * 1 tsp olive oil
- * 3 cloves smashed garlic
- * 28 oz can crushed tomatoes
- * 1/2 onion (don't chop)
- * salt and pepper

Instructions:

- * Wet bread with just enough water (or milk) to wet and then mash up with your hands.
- * Add to large bowl and combine with chopped beef, chopped spinach, egg, garlic, parsley, grated cheese, salt and pepper. Mix all ingredients well until thoroughly combined.
- * Using a 1/4 cup measuring cup, measure meat and then divide in two so that each meatball is 1/8th of a cup. Roll into little meatballs.
- * Make the sauce. In a large pot, add 1 teaspoon olive oil and heat on medium heat.
- * When hot add smashed garlic.
- * When garlic is golden brown, about 1 to 2 minutes add the tomatoes, onion, salt and pepper and cover, reduce heat to low.
- * Meanwhile, in a large nonstick skillet, add 1 tbsp olive oil on low heat.
- * When oil is hot add as many meatballs that will fit, cook on low, turning often so that all side get browned. Cook until the centers are cooked through.
- * When finished, place on a dish lined with paper towels to blot any excess oil. Drop meatballs into sauce and continue cooking the remaining meatballs, repeating the process. When all meatballs are in the sauce, simmer for an additional 15 minutes. Discard onion and serve.

Serving: 5 meatballs w/ 4.5 oz sauce, Calories: 259kcal, Carbohydrates: 15g, Protein: 20.5g, Fat: 10.5g, Saturated Fat: 4g, Cholesterol: 81mg, Sodium: 512.5mg, Fiber: 2g, Sugar: 5.5g