

March 14, 2012



Methogram

“The mission of First United Methodist Church of Silsbee is to glorify God and transform lives in Christ

The Methogram is a publication of :
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Dan's Divinities

One of my favorite church members came into the office recently and asked me, “Did you say, that Hell is a state of mind?” Apparently others are telling her that is what I have said, which casts doubt on whether or not I believe in the reality of Hell, which, in turn, casts doubt on the orthodoxy of my theology.

Please allow me to address this question about the reality of Hell directly:

Hell is not a state of mind; it is the state of being separated from God for eternity. It is the condition of the unredeemed soul after death, just like Heaven is the state of the redeemed soul after death. When we are in relationship with God in this life, we are getting a little taste of Heaven in this life – St. Paul calls this the seal of the Holy Spirit and the pledge of our inheritance which is in heaven (Eph. 1:13-14). Similarly, when people are separated from God in this life and live according to the ways of the world, they often get a taste of Hell, the natural result of a sinful life.

Jesus called Hell, “Gehenna” in Matthew 18:8 and subsequent verses. Many English translations just translate “Gehenna” as “Hell,” but the Greek word was “Gehenna.” Gehenna was a valley just outside the southwestern wall of Jerusalem where children were burned to death in the age of some of the early

Judean Kings as a sacrifice to the pagan god Molech. This practice was so abhorrent to the faithful Jews that they were encouraged to dump their garbage and excrement there. The decomposition process produces both horrid odors and continuous spontaneous combustion. Worms and maggots were always there. It was an awful, nasty, and religiously and hygienically unclean place. What Jesus was warning people about was that if we continue living in sin, we are going to end up in Gehenna, in the garbage dump, and our lives are going to be wasted. Now, I don't believe that Hell can be geographically located in the Valley of Gehenna, for Jesus was using a metaphor to drive home a point and call us to repentance. Every time the wind was from the southwest, the residents of Jerusalem got a wiff of what Hell was going to be like.

I see a lot of people throwing their own lives on the garbage dump, and are in danger of staying there forever. Blessed are those who get out of the garbage dump, and decide to follow Jesus and live the life of a Christian disciple pursuing holiness and Christian love.

Pastor Dan

P.S. We are offering a little foretaste of Heaven Sunday during worship for those who care to attend!

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The Labyrinth: A Walking Meditation

As a part of our Lenten observance, we will be setting up one of the Prayer Labyrinths that belongs to the Texas Annual Conference in Cravens Fellowship Hall, Room 200, beginning this Sunday, March 18, at 6:00 p.m. through Wednesday evening, March 21. The building will be open Sunday from 6:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. and Monday through Wednesday from 6:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. You are invited to come and walk the prayer labyrinth at any time. It is a wonderful meditation tool, and you will have a different experience each time you walk it.

Below, you will find some general information about walking the labyrinth.

A labyrinth is a spiritual tool for prayer and meditation. The labyrinth may be seen as a metaphor for one's spiritual journey. The design of this canvas labyrinth is taken from the labyrinth laid in the floor of the Chartres Cathedral in France in the 1200's CE. It is an 11-circuit labyrinth, containing eleven concentric circles with a 12th circle as its center.

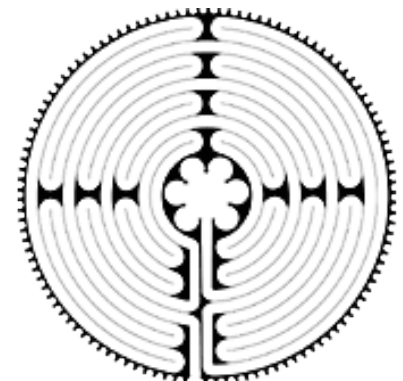
Though this labyrinth is Christian in design, labyrinths of varying designs have been discovered in many world cultures and religions. The labyrinth is symbolic of unity and wholeness.

A labyrinth is unlike a maze in that it has a single path leading in to the center and back out again. A maze has many paths with blinds, dead-ends, wrong turns, and tricks. The one path on the labyrinth winds throughout the circle to the center and back out again. It is designed to help an individual find the way.

Labyrinths are non-linear. That means that the path goes through the four quadrants in a non-sequential way. When you follow the path slowly enough, outside distractions disappear so that you lose you sense of where you are and can then focus on God's revealed truth.

Basic Guidelines

- * Remove your shoes before entering this sacred space. (Please wear socks)
- * Find your own pace on the path. Pilgrims will not always walk at the same pace and passing is common.
- * Remember that the path is two-way, so persons journeying in will meet those coming out.
- * You may step off the path into the labrys (spaces at each turn) if you need to be still, rest a moment, or go more deeply into prayer.
- * Before entering, take a couple of cleansing breaths and surrender the experience to the Divine.
- * As you journey in, release distractions; attend and open to the Spirit. In the center, receive God's gift/word for you. On the outward journey, join yourself more fully with God; integrate this time with your life.
- * After walking, you may wish to write down some of your thoughts and feelings, draw, or color as a way to further process your experience.



Lenten Sermon Series

Please join us each Sunday for my Lenten Sermon Series, entitled, "Journeying through the Valleys of Life."

- * Sunday, March 18th, "Dealing with Guilt," John 3:14-21
- * Sunday, March 25th, "Dealing with Depression," John 12:20-36
- * Palm/Passion Sunday, April 1st, "Dealing with Tragedy and Grief" Mark 15:21-47
- * Maundy Thursday, April 4, 7:00 p.m., "Dealing with Self-Centeredness," John 13:1-35
- * Good Friday, April 5, 7:00 p.m., Tenebrae Service
- * Easter Sunday, April 8th "Journey to Victory" (Includes our Choir Cantata at the 11:00 a.m. service), Mark 16:1-8



Please join us for
our Annual
Easter Egg Hunt!
Palm Sunday
April 1, 2012
3:00 pm
Location to
be announced



Worship

This Sunday, March 18, it the fourth Sunday of Lent, and we will be talking about Dealing with Guilt, based on John 3:14-21. We may also take a look at Number 21:2-9 and Ephesians 2:1-10. This Sunday is, also, Girl Scout Sunday, and we will be hosting the troops which meet in our church and their families. This year is the 100th Anniversary of Girl Scouting.

On Sunday, March 25th, our theme will be "Dealing with Depression" as we continue our series on "Journeying through the Valleys of Life."

In Loving Memory

Chris Crawford

Robert and Yvonne Neyland

Valree Karr

Allan and Dagma Murphy
Gus and Johni Ruth Dunbar
Angela and Ray Baker
Zim and Linda Morris
Ed and Sonia Cain
Eastham Forge, Inc.

Presence

Worship

03/04 146
03.11 155

Sunday School

03/04 105
03/11 95

Gifts

03/04/2012

\$11,720.40

03/11/2012

\$8,838.00

One Great Hour of Sharing

\$379.00



Join us for a time of coffee, fellowship and
live music!

Saturday, March 24, 2012
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

First United Methodist Church of Silsbee
670 North 5th Street
Silsbee, TX 77656

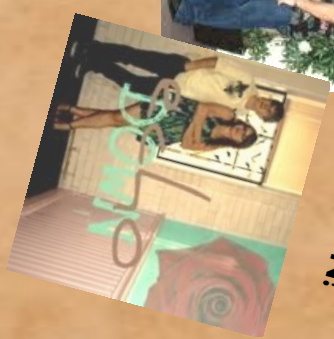
BRETTEEN
LOWE!



WOODCREST
UMC
PRAISE
BAND!



ECHO
DOWN!



There is no entry fee for this event. Donations are welcome.

First United Methodist Church
670 North 5th Street
Silsbee Texas 77656

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