

# THE CALLING



**FIRST  
METHODIST  
ARDMORE**

## THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN PASTORS AND STARS

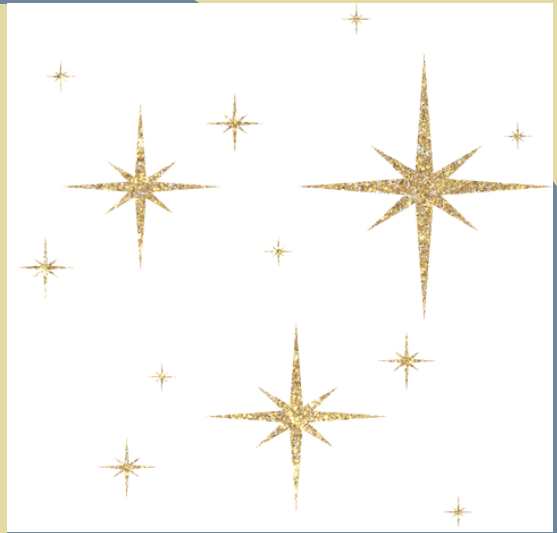
Excerpt from Sparkling Gems from the Greek Vol. II  
by Rick Renner

Did you know that Jesus symbolically likened pastors to “stars?” That’s right - that’s what the Bible tells us in Revelation 1:16 and 20. Why did Christ liken pastors to “stars,” and what does this tell us about pastors? If you have a pastor, I think you’ll really enjoy reading this *Sparkling Gem*. I believe this discussion today will deepen your appreciation and esteem for the gift God placed in your life when He gave you your pastor. And I pray it will fuel your desire to consistently pray for your pastor so his light shines strong and burns long for Jesus Christ!

The word “stars” comes from the Greek word *asteras*, which simply means *stars* - the same word we would use to describe the stars in the universe. The meaning of these stars is found in Revelation 1:20, where Jesus explained, “...The seven stars are the *angels* of the seven churches...” The word “angels” is from the Greek word *angelos*, which, in this case, refers to human *messengers*. Specifically, it referred to the *pastors* of the churches Christ was addressing.

Why did Jesus use “stars” to describe the pastors He was addressing in the book of Revelation? What was the symbolic significance of this, and what does the scriptural use of this metaphor tell us about the ministry of a pastor?

- Like the stars in the heavens, even the most bright and shining pastoral ministry is *temporary* and *fading*. Although a pastor may serve in one location for many years, there is no such thing as a permanent pastor. Eventually a time comes when his or her light begins to fade so a new “star” can be born. In time, each pastor begins to wind down and prepare for another pastor to take his or her place and become a guiding light for that church and community.



AND HE HAD IN HIS RIGHT  
HAND SEVEN STARS...THE  
SEVEN STARS ARE THE  
ANGELS OF THE SEVEN  
CHURCHES...

~REVELATION 1:16, 20

## A Prayer for Our Pastors

*Heavenly Father, I thank You for what I have learned today about pastoral ministry. I specifically pray for my pastors -- that they will have sufficient spiritual fuel in the core of their being for a long-lasting ministry; that my pastors' ministry will be more stable and strong the older they get; that my pastors will take their unique roles among all pastors; that they know the "orbit" designed and laid out for their pastoral ministry; and that they will fulfill the divine destiny that You have planned for their lives. I thank You for the way my pastors serve, and I ask You, Father, to bless them abundantly. Give them the wisdom, power and strength that is needed for a long-term ministry that brings forth much fruit for the Kingdom of Heaven.*

*I pray this in Jesus' name!*

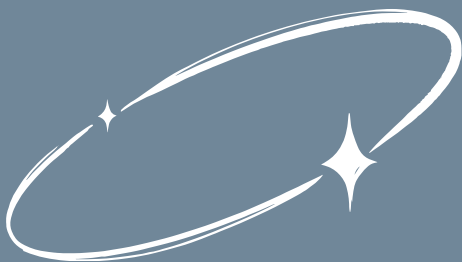
## EXCERPT FROM SPARKLING GEMS CONT'D

- The lifespan of a pastor's ministry may be short or long, depending on several factors. One key factor is the amount of spiritual fuel and endurance he has at his core, as well as the rate at which he expends that fuel in running his race.
- Like the stars in the universe, no two pastors are exactly alike. God calls some pastors to lead massive churches, others to lead medium-sized churches, and still others to lead smaller churches. Some pastors are called to be bright lights who are well known to the masses, whereas others are called to have less visibility in smaller churches or communities. Regardless of the size of their congregation or ministry, however, pastors are called to shine their light in a way that is consistent with their own unique calling.
- Just as stars have an appointed orbit, God has a predetermined course or an "orbit" for each pastor to follow. This would include the details that make a pastor's call to minister the Gospel distinct and unique, such as where he is called to serve, what culture he is called to impact, and which people he is called to minister to. Just as stars cross the paths of other stars, each pastor's course will cross the paths of other pastors so he can fellowship with and be influenced by them. Nevertheless, a pastor must be careful not to veer from his own divine call so his light can shine in the area or "orbit" God has ordained for him.

From the facts and symbolic comparisons we've read today, we can see there are many similarities between pastors and stars. It's an understatement to say that Christ knew these facts a long time before science knew them -- that's why He used stars symbolically to describe pastoral ministry.

In light of what we've read in today's *Sparkling Gem*, let's commit to praying daily for our pastors: 1) that they become everything God intends them to be; 2) that they will possess a sustained supply of spiritual energy at their core and shine as God intended them to shine; and 3) that they'll be empowered to provide the necessary guiding light for their congregations and communities. Our prayers of faith will avail much, impacting for eternity not only our pastors' lives, but also every place and every person they are called to reach with the truth of the Gospel and the love of Jesus Christ!

~You can read the full version of this *Sparkling Gem* by purchasing [Sparkling Gems from the Greek Volume II](#) by Rick Renner, page 1029 or come by the church office.





Session 1: Sydney Pope



Session 2: Parker Eubanks



Session 3: Lainie Chambers



Sunday Message: Kathryn Brooks



# DISCOVERY WEEKEND 2024

Discovery is a spiritual weekend for junior high students to come and experience God's love. The middle school youth are served by the high school youth during this weekend. Our goal for the high school youth is to learn more about being a servant for God while being mentored throughout the weekend by adult leaders. Activities include small groups, worship, speakers, prayer, fellowship and recreation.

This year's theme was EXCHANGE. Students learned that we all need to exchange a worldly good in reflection of Christ's sacrifice for us.



70 Junior High and High School students participated this year

*Thank you to all volunteers and host homes for helping us make this year another success!*



## GLADYS BERRY STUDENT LOAN

This is a reminder for all members that Gladys Berry created a trust at BancFirst to be used as a loan fund by FMC youth pursuing a degree of higher education. Applications for loans may be obtained from Susan Henderson in the trust department at BancFirst. Repayment terms are extremely generous. A few restrictions apply.

If you have questions, please call Susan Henderson at 580-221-5321.



## JANUARY EVENTS

- ★ January 8 - Daniel Fast
- ★ January 10 - Mid-Week Spring Session Starts  
5:30 - 7 pm CMC Room 133
- ★ January 20 - Administrative Council Visioning  
9 am - 2 pm CMC Room 115 A & B
- ★ January 21 - Confirmation Parent Meeting - 12 pm
- ★ January 26-28 - Faith Promise Weekend
- ★ January 28 - Confirmation Party - 4 pm
- ★ January 28 - All Church Dinner (Fast Celebration)  
5 - 6:30 pm CMC Room 133



A great time was had by all at  
Jingle Jam!

## CHILDREN'S CHOIR



The Children's Choir performing during the  
EPIC Christmas Eve Service

## JINGLE JAM!

PRECIOUS JESUS REDEEMER  
YOU'VE COME TO SAVE THE WORLD

## STEWARDSHIP REPORT

It is with thanksgiving and a humble heart that I report we have received 139 pledges totaling **\$1,295,804.40** for the 2024 budget. On behalf of the Finance Committee, Pastors, Staff, and all ministries of Ardmore First, I want to thank you for your support to our church as we continue to press into the calling God has placed on all of us.

God bless you and your church in 2024. Happy New Year!

Renny Collins  
Finance Chair



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### DANIEL FAST

Join us for our 21-day corporate fast Monday, January 8 through Sunday, January 28. For all of our Daniel Fast resources, including the 2024 Fasting Guide and Optional Fasting Guide, visit our website [ardmorefirst.org/daniel-fast/](https://ardmorefirst.org/daniel-fast/).

### MID-WEEK

Our Spring Mid-Week session will begin on Wednesday, January 10 and will conclude on Wednesday, March 13. We are excited about a great spring session! For all of the Mid-Week information including bible study information, dinner menus and what to expect visit our website at [ardmorefirst.org/mid-week/](https://ardmorefirst.org/mid-week/).

### EXPERIENCING GOD

We are excited to start our church wide study Experiencing God in February. Over the years God has used the truths of Experiencing God to awaken believers to a radically God-centered way of life. As a result, millions have come to know God intimately, to recognize his voice and to understand his will for their lives. God is inviting you to experience him in an intimate love relationship through which he reveals to you his will, his ways and his work. We will be offering the Experiencing God class in a variety of options throughout our church. For all of the Experiencing God class information visit our website at [ardmorefirst.org/experiencing-god/](https://ardmorefirst.org/experiencing-god/).

DAVID DANIEL, SENIOR PASTOR  
JOHN HOLLON, ASSOCIATE PASTOR  
KIRA CALHOUN-WILSON,  
ASSOCIATE PASTOR

### SUNDAY SERVICES

9 AM TRADITIONAL  
10 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL  
11:05 AM EPIC

### PRAYER CHAIN

LISA & LENNY FRANK  
(580) 465-7515  
FRANK.LENNYLISA@YAHOO.COM

WADELL & SHEILA ALTOM  
(580) 223-7272

501 W. MAIN  
ARDMORE, OK 73401  
(580) 223-5390  
[ARDMOREFIRST.ORG](http://ARDMOREFIRST.ORG)

TELEVISED AT 11 AM ON  
SPARKLIGHT CHANNEL 56

BROADCAST AT 9 AM ON KVSO  
1240 AM AND 107.5 FM  
LIVE STREAM [ONLINE](#) AND ROKU

## FAITH PROMISE WEEKEND SCHEDULE

- January 26  
6 pm Watoto Children's Choir
- January 27  
7 am Breakfast with Mission Partners  
8 am - noon Work Projects  
12 - 2 pm Lunch with Mission Partners
- January 28  
Traditional Service - Dan Patman,  
Speaker  
10 am Mission Partners Share in  
Sunday School Classes  
11 am Epic Service - Dan Patman,  
Speaker

## MISSIONS OUTREACH UPDATE

Faith Promise Weekend is almost here. Have you heard our church gives money to missions through our Faith Promise giving? Maybe you have never heard of what Faith Promise giving is?

Faith Promise is a financial commitment to God strictly for missions both here in Ardmore, statewide, regionally, and even beyond the USA borders. This commitment is an amount of money over and beyond what you already give to tithes and offerings of the church. Making a Faith Promise is for anyone and any age from the small child, teenagers, and adults. Each person can make their own Faith Promise and learn how God is a Faithful God in all things in their life.

There are 2 components of the commitment to God in giving a pledge to missions for the year. One component is prayer on your part to hear what God is calling for you to Promise or Pledge for mission giving. This amount may be so out of line with your current finances you think it will not be possible. Now, here is the second component and it is Faith that God will provide the pledged amount he is calling you to give.

Our Faith Promise Weekend will be January 26th through 28th starting out Friday night with the Ugandan Watoto Children's Choir at 6 PM. The weekend will include Saturday morning breakfast, local service/work projects to participate in and lunch. This will include time to spend with our mission and ministry partners our church is already involved with. You can hear directly from them how God is using them in ministry. On Sunday morning our keynote speaker is our own Rev. Dan Patman speaking from his heart why missions is so important to extending God's kingdom here on earth and why it is important to you to participate in mission giving to your church.

Be on the lookout for your letter and commitment card coming in the mail very soon and make plans to attend this important weekend. You will be blessed beyond measure to hear how God is moving in the world. Acts 1:8 is the mission verse our Global Outreach Team or GO Team follows: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." We are called to be witnesses or send witnesses everywhere being the hands and feet of Christ of this earth.

Rebecca Reed  
Missions Outreach Coordinator  
[reed@ardmorefirst.org](mailto:reed@ardmorefirst.org)  
580-465-1540

Ardenmore First -

We are filled with thanks to the Lord  
as this donation will allow us to  
begin and expand our ministry.

Jon & Sue Dixon

Bill, Reineel Melinger

Rev. Joel D. Thompson  
Richard & Barbara Robertson

Mauden Harden

Shirley Cappon - Thanks so much

Mark & Jackie Ottum



THANK YOU CARD FROM THE  
WYNNEWOOD METHODIST CHURCH  
~PASTOR BILL MCANGUS



## A WORD FROM YOUR LAY LEADER



I pray your Christmas Season was blessed. I know the Christmas Eve Service I attended was wonderful, and even if my youngest granddaughter was a bit noisy it was special to have all of our family worshipping with us again. We are kicking off the year with a LOT of midweek activity and invite you to come be a part. I am sure you will see and hear more about it, but meal at 5:30 and a series of different study topics at 6-7pm, starting with Karen Chaffin on How to Study Scripture.

The next thing I want to stress is very important to the future of our congregation. We are having a Visioning Retreat on January 20, from 9-2. A meal will be provided, as well as child care if any need that. While we are encouraging all members of the various committees to take part, this is also open to everyone in the church. We need your participation and input! Be in prayer about where God is calling us to be active, what our Church will look like and how we will be His Hands and Feet in the coming years!

Some have wondered how we find out more about what is going on in our Heartland Conference of the Global Methodist Church .... Well, I'm glad you asked! You can go to <https://heartlandgmc.org/> to find our Conference website. In the upper right corner you will find 3 bars to click on, then look at Resources, and below that Subscribe for Heartland News. This is one way you can keep up with our growing Conference. While you are there, poke around. Check out the Directory of GMC Churches, our Conference Leadership, and let me know if there is anyone there that you recognize? Maybe more than one person?

This is an additional link for the Wesleyan Covenant Association newsletter. Our former Pastor, Dr. Wade Pascal, is involved in this group.  
<https://wesleyancovenant.org/newsletter/>

While you are looking around, check out this website too:  
<https://globalmethodist.org/> for the Denominational website. Find the 3 bars in the upper right corner, then under Connect, and Subscribe to get updates from the Global Methodist Church. Poke around there also and see what interesting things you can find.

As always, if you have praise for our Staff and Programs, suggestions for improvements or new ministries, or questions that I might be able to help find the answers for, feel free to call or email me. 580-465-4699 and [reedp.rfp@gmail.com](mailto:reedp.rfp@gmail.com).

Blessings and Peace,

Paul Reed

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ✚ The Cude Clothes Closet is open Mondays from 1 - 3 pm and Wednesdays from 9 - 11 am.
- ✚ We have a lost and found at the Welcome Center. Please check for any lost items!
- ✚ We provide sack lunch vouchers to those in need every Wednesday from 9 - 11 am.

### WELCOME

LEO CLYDE RIGGLE  
SON OF LONDON & KIERA RIGGLE  
GRANDSON OF RANDLE & LISA RIGGLE  
GREAT GRANDSON OF DON &  
CAROLYN YEAGER



## JOYS AND CONCERNS

### Current Prayers Needed:

The Family of Brett Flatt on the passing of his father, JB Flatt

Greg Lohden  
Wayne McClure  
Kenneth Walker  
Israel

### On-Going Prayers:

Susan Mertes  
Dana Murrah  
Pat Padberg  
Cleta Phillips  
Barry Ross - OU Medical Center  
Penny Wells

### WEBSITES TO CHECK OUT

- First Methodist Church Ardmore - [ardmorefirst.org](http://ardmorefirst.org) or find us on Facebook at First Methodist Ardmore.
- Global Methodist Church Heartland Conference [heartlandgmc.org](http://heartlandgmc.org).
- [seedbed.com](http://seedbed.com)
- Wake-Up Call Daily Devotional - [seedbed.com/wakeupcall/](http://seedbed.com/wakeupcall/)
- [firebrandmag.com](http://firebrandmag.com)

