

The Messenger

May 26, 2020
Volume 44, Issue 16

A publication of Laurel Heights United Methodist Church

Laughter, lament, longing

Rev. Paul L. Escamilla, Senior Pastor

Earlier this month the weekday school hosted a teacher-appreciation-week “parade” of sorts through the church parking lot. While teachers maintained distance, with masks, parents were invited to inch their vehicles slowly through the driveway, allowing children to wave at teachers who stood some 20 feet away through their car windows.

The children were absolutely delighted to have a glimpse of their teachers as they slowly moved through the parking lot in their vehicles. Imagine the smiles, waves, and shouts of teachers’ names as teachers called their names in return. “We love you!” “We miss you!” “It’s so good to see you!” One little boy expressed the carried-awayness of so many of the children with an exuberance that was through the roof—literally. With his mom’s permission he had left his seat and hoisted his head through the sunroof, raising his arms as he cheered and smiled and waved.

As his teachers faded from view, suddenly a different reality dawned on him—that he was not staying, not joining his teachers and friends for a wonderful day at the Laurel Heights Weekday School. His smile disappeared, and he lowered his hands, dropped away from the sunroof, and buried his head in his mother’s lap to cry.

In a matter of seconds a young child brought to expression the unparalleled mix of emotions many of us feel in our current environment: joy in new discoveries, new connections, new adventures in improvisation, new appreciation for one another’s faces and voices and stories, a

keen sense of solidarity through this unprecedented sojourn; and then sorrow—at seeing the world in such hurt, in certain cases experiencing it ourselves in ways small or profound; sorrow at our separation from one another and the sacred rhythms we keep that also keep us; and finally, longing. We long for the air to clear, the masks to come off, the world to hum again—no, sing—in ways that are safe, healthy, and comforting in their familiarity. Laughter, lament, longing—the soul’s loom has woven this range of emotions into a single cloth, one as precious as it is particular. May that finely woven cloth serve to comfort and warm those within our many circles of care, and in some small way, the whole hurting world.

Grace and peace.



Laurel Heights United Methodist Church has adopted the following safety protocols related to COVID-19:

- 1) Masks and social-distancing will be required of all who attend services, meetings, or other activities.
- 2) No nursery/childcare will be available.
- 3) Deep cleaning will precede and follow all events.

These protocols have been developed and approved under the auspices of the church's Administrative Council.

At present we are **tentatively** planning to resume Sunday worship in the sanctuary on **June 14th**. Other carefully selected activities are being considered to resume thereafter.

Dear Laurel Heights Community

In the light of the COVID-19 health crisis, Laurel Heights United Methodist Church is exploring how best to plan for the coming weeks. Please take just a few minutes to complete a brief survey to assist the church's leadership in this effort. Thank you for your input.

Click on this link to take the survey:

<https://www.laurelheights.org/surveys>

**In light of COVID-19,
Vacation Bible School *as we had planned it*, has been canceled.
It is our hope to propose some
alternative gatherings later in the
summer.**

Click [here](#) to view Bishop Robert Schnase's address on the reopening of churches.



Click [here](#) to read [Why Reopening a Church is Different](#) by Rev. Alex A. Shanks.

summer isn't canceled

Click here to find out how to be involved with Project Transformation 2020.

Something is Happening; How to Live it Out

Rev. Jim Carr, Minister of Pastoral Care



I have been sharing thoughts from Henri Nouwen's, "A Spirituality of Waiting: Being Alert to God's Presence in Our Lives." We have listened as he has spoken about the nature of waiting. This week, we hear what he says about the practice of waiting.

Nouwen says, "Now let me say something about the practice of waiting. How do we wait? One of the most beautiful passages of scripture is Luke 1:39-56, which suggests that we wait together, as did Mary and Elizabeth. What happened when Mary received the words of promise? She went to Elizabeth. Something was happening to Elizabeth as well as to Mary. But how could they live that out?"

In Shakespeare's play, Hamlet says, "To be, or not to be—that is the question." Nouwen may give us an analogous way of stating our own issue: something is happening, how do we live it out? This is a big question, and it matters how we answer.

Nouwen goes on, "I find the meeting of these two women very moving, because Elizabeth and Mary came together and enabled each other to wait."

"When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

Luke 1:39-45

"These two women created space for each other to wait. They affirmed for each other that something was happening that was worth waiting for. I think that is the model of the Christian community. It is a community of support, celebration, and affirmation in which we can lift up what has already begun in us. The visit of Elizabeth and Mary is one of the Bible's most beautiful expressions of what it means to form community, to be together, gathered around a promise, affirming that something is really happening."

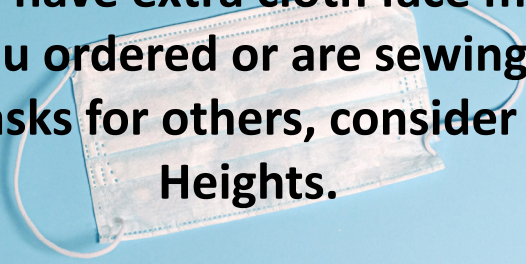
I am quoting Nouwen a lot, but I simply have to quote the next paragraph in its entirety because I believe it speaks so well to what we are experiencing right now.

"The whole meaning of the Christian community lies in offering a space in which we can wait for what we have already seen. Christian community is the place where we keep the flame alive among us and take it seriously, so that it can grow and become stronger in us. In this way we can live with courage, trusting that there is a spiritual power in us that allows us to live in this world without being seduced constantly by despair, lostness, and darkness. This is how we dare to say that God is a God of love when we see hatred all around us. That is why we can claim that God is a God of life even when we see death and destruction and agony all around us. We say it together. We affirm it in each other. Waiting together, nurturing what has already begun, expecting its fulfillment—that is the meaning of marriage, friendship, community, and the Christian life."

Our Life Together

Face Masks Needed

If you have extra cloth face masks that you ordered or are sewing cloth face masks for others, consider Laurel Heights.



Email Liz Escamilla if you can contribute elescamilla96@gmail.com

Experience Your Worshipping Community Online

@Laurel Heights UMC

Sermon
Audio

Listen to the full sermon here:
[A bless day.](#)

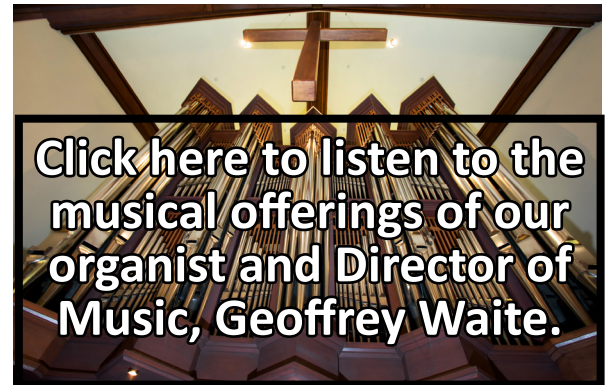


JOYS AND CONCERNS

Joy: Bob and Margaret Parsons are celebrating the arrival of a new great-grand baby. Jonathan Cedric Drake was born May 11 at 6:27 PM. Everett is now a big brother. Both mother and baby are doing well.

Healing: Billie Arredondo, Will Beal, William Beuhler, Ruben Espinoza, Vicki Ferguson, Diane Halim, Estelle Hogan, Larry Howard, Liz Hughes, Gracie Huron, Marvin Huth, Jane Manning, Dean Pearson, Doug Semmes, Beverly Smith, Gena (Thad Dorsey), Jeanne Coder (Clyta Coder), Meg Mollohan (Rachel Goeres), Hanna McCuistion (Vicki McCuistion), Artis Owens (Barbara Miller), Bryan Geist, Nora Winkler (Teresa Garces), David Bebinger, Marilyn Cook (Ann Wheeler).

For those who mourn: The family and friends of Beth Rankin. **God's Presence:** Those affected by the COVID-19 virus and their families, as well as for the caregivers and researchers working to treat those affected and combat the spread of the disease; homebound members, the incarcerated, and women and men in our military.



Wednesday Evening Prayer Service

Though scattered, we are gathered in prayer in the name of the one from whose love and belonging nothing can separate us from Christ our Lord. Tomorrow (5/27) from 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. we will have a time to gather by Zoom to pray for one another and the world. Rev. Paul Escamilla will guide the meeting.

There are three ways to join the service:

Option 1: Click on this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/130214408>

Option 2: Download the Zoom app, click Join Meeting and enter the Meeting ID: 130 214 408

Option 3: Call (346)248-7799, and when prompted enter the Meeting ID: 130 214 408



Music Time
with
Mr. David!

Take some time today to have some fun with our Director of Children's Choirs, David Lindquist.

Memorial Gifts

General Memorial Fund

In memory of Rev. Mal Hierholzer,
given by Janice Windham.

In memory of Rev. Mal Hierholzer,
given by Susie McClung.

In memory of Dr. Reeves Smith,
given by Helen & Henry Perkins.

In memory of Truman Smith,
given by Juanita Souder.

In memory of Diane Boehme,
given by Juanita Souder.

In memory of Lydia Powell,
given by Juanita Souder.

In memory of Truman Smith,
given by Juanita Souder.

In memory of Dr. Reeves Smith,
given by Wesley Dowdy.

In memory of Dr. Reeves Smith,
given by Tom Kurtz.

In memory of Dr. Reeves Smith,
given by Camilla Parker.

In memory of Dr. Reeves Smith,
given by Sarah Conger.

In memory of Dr. Reeves Smith,
given by Ann Watson.

Pastor's Discretionary Fund

In memory of Truman Smith,
given by Nancy & Richard Dugger.

In memory of Dr. Reeves Smith,
given by Jerry Crockett.

In memory of Dr. Reeves Smith,
given by Nancy & Richard Dugger.

In memory of Dr. Reeves Smith,
given by Barbara & Pal Wenger.

May 2020 Mission of the Month Church Under the Bridge

To help support CUB this month, consider donating the following items:

- Individually wrapped snacks and desserts
- Gently used or new men's, women's, and children's clothing
- New white socks • Backpacks • Gloves
- Personal and oral hygiene items (men and women)
- Financial contributions can be made through LHUMC (laurelheights.org/donate)

**Donations will be accepted every
Friday from 2-3 p.m.
at Church Under the Bridge
724 Chestnut St., San Antonio, TX
78202**

For additional information or questions, contact
Judy Davis (210) 392-2282.

Birthday Blessings May 27-June 2

5/27
Bertha Basil
Nathan Garza

5/28
Glynis Taylor

5/29
Mari Alvarez
Luke Farias

5/31
Jeanne Redmond

6/1
James Verette
Caroline Allison

6/2
Will Campbell
Mark Phillips

Giving to Laurel Heights

Online Gifts:

Please visit our website,
www.laurelheights.org/donate

Text-to-Give:

Please text "LHUMC" to 73256.
For illustrated, step-by-step online and
text giving instructions, click [here](#).

Give By Check:

Please mail to LHUMC,
attn: Bookkeeper,
227 W. Woodlawn Ave.,
San Antonio, TX, 78212.

Contact Us

To reach the office staff by phone, please call (210) 733-7156. For an appointment with our Yvonne Garcia, RN, our Wesley Nurse, please call (210) 272-7921. For a full list of staff email address, please visit our website: www.laurelheights.org