



The Messenger

November 18, 2020
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Democrats, Republicans, and Methodists

Rev. Paul L. Escamilla, Senior Pastor

On March 30th, 1981 President Ronald Reagan was shot by a would-be assassin. He was rushed to George Washington University Hospital in D.C. where he was stabilized and prepped for exploratory surgery. As a team of doctors surrounded his bed, he propped himself up on one elbow, pulled off his oxygen mask, and said, “I sure hope you’re all Republicans.” At the foot of the bed stood Dr. Joe Giordano, the hospital’s chief of surgery, and a die-hard liberal. Without missing a beat he answered, “Today, Mr. President, we’re all Republicans.”



The story has become iconic for me, a classic demonstration of what it means to rise above politics for a greater cause, whether it be responding to a human being in distress, a world besieged by a virus, or a nation divided. In the face of Covid, of racial tension, of deep political rancor, we’re all Republicans . . . and we’re all Democrats. In other words, first and foremost we are all humans, called to join together to address a range of difficulties for the sake of our community, our country, and all of humanity.

Earlier this week Bert Clayton shared a quote with Jon Lowry, Jim Carr, and me that I found both amusing and instructive. The words belong to President Ulysses S. Grant, who quipped that there were three parties in America that he was forced to deal with as president—the Democrats, the Republicans . . . and the Methodists.

Being a Methodist himself, President Grant could make fun of his own religious “party.” But I think he was also saying something else with the statement—that to be Methodist is to defy political striping, tribal allegiance, and a herd mentality in order to bring to public affairs a perspective that is at once judicious and generous, encouraging both critical thought and free expression, yet always in the spirit of civility. Drawing from Scripture, John Wesley said it well in another context: “If your heart is with my heart, give me your hand” (2 Kings 10:15).

What I have so deeply appreciated about the Laurel Heights community in this fraught and arduous season is our willingness, our readiness, our resolve to rise above politics, banding together to seek to respond to the host of challenges that have crowded our year. Surely we differ from one another in our politics, but our hearts together yearn for the same good society, for “liberty and justice for all.” In that spirit, we have again and again taken one another’s hand, and I am grateful.

Grace and peace.

“Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may. Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences.” **John Wesley**

Notes from the Faith Journey



As an educator, and since the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic, I have probably spent a disproportionate amount of my time in an adrenalin-induced state of stress and anxiety. Wrestling with course structures, syllabus and schedule revisions, simultaneously working with in-person and remote learners, wondering how to sustainably engage students using Zoom. Zoom, the “Hollywood Squares of Franz Kafka,” a colleague of mine once remarked early in this pandemic era.

In the midst of this, I ask myself what am I grateful for? When I step out of the anxiety to pause and wonder in this manner, the short answer is always “everything.” So many blessings, too numerous to list them all. So I’ll pick two: bicycling and hymns.

I try to stay in shape...sort of. I have a 30-year old mountain bike I ride back and forth to work most days. Sometimes people are impressed that I commute on a bicycle. “How far do you ride?” they’ll ask. I used to say it was 5 miles. Then one day I actually measured it. As it turned out, I was liberally rounding up. It’s only 4.2 miles one way. Your math teacher would tell you that if you were going to do any rounding in this example, it would be down to 4, not up to 5.

The amazing thing though is that when I’m riding, sometimes a hymn will spontaneously begin playing in my head. Sometimes it will be from the previous Sunday’s worship service; sometimes seemingly randomly selected from my mental hymnal catalog. Most recently it was “Great is Thy Faithfulness.” It is a beautiful thing, pedaling and humming or singing along.

And it’s okay that the ride is only 4.2 miles, because at the pace I’m pedaling I still get to hear the whole hymn.

Frank Healy



Pre-Charge Conference “Administrative Council Plus” meeting

This year we will not have a traditional charge conference. Our charge conference will be held with several other churches, will be on ZOOM and will be attended by representatives of the church’s leadership.

However, all church members are invited to attend a special meeting of the Administrative Council plus everyone else in the church who wishes to attend and participate. The meeting will be by ZOOM on Saturday, December 5 at 10 a.m. This will mirror what we ordinarily do in the charge conference and will be an opportunity for everyone in the church to participate in what normally occurs in the charge conference. The consensus from this meeting will be the basis of a consent agenda which will be presented to the District Superintendent at the charge conference.

The topics for the December 5 meeting (and ultimately the charge conference) include:

- 1) Clergy salary
- 2) The nominations slate, which is the election of lay leadership within our congregation. Approving this slate is one of the duties of the Church/Charge Conference and thereafter each committee is then accountable to the Church Conference. Each committee member makes decisions on behalf of the congregation, based on what they believe to be the purpose and vision of this church. The leadership by our laity is an expression of each member’s covenant to the local church body and The United Methodist Church to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness.
- 3) Ministry reports.

The decisions from this meeting will be presented as a packet at the Church Conference on December 10, along with reports of seventeen other churches in the Las Misiones District.

**So, please put the December 5 meeting on your calendar and look for the link to attend.
Thank you.**

Wednesday Prayer Service

November 18 from 6:30-7:00 p.m.

Though scattered, we are gathered in prayer in the name of the One from whose love nothing can separate.

There are three ways to join the service:

Option 1:

Click on this link: <https://www.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



*A time to
to pray for one another
and the world...*

LHUMC YOUTH

Join us in November!



Questions

Please contact Marisa Parker

@ 210-391-0685

Join us!

**November 28:
Flashlight Scavenger
Hunt & Labyrinth**

6:30 pm to 9 pm

@ Covenant Baptist Church

19204 FM RD 2252

San Antonio, Texas



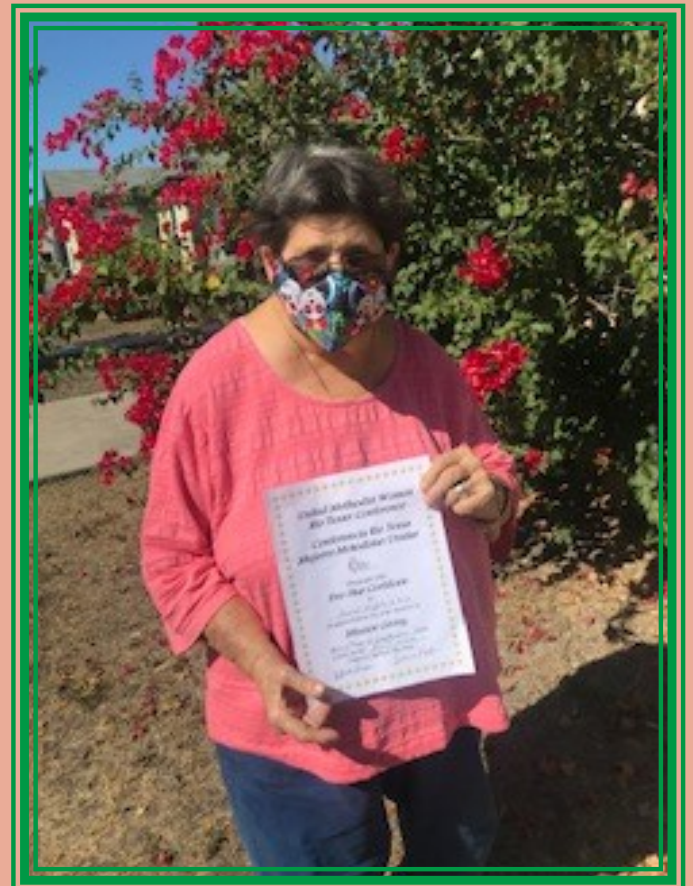
The United Methodist Women of
the Rio Texas Conference

have honored the Laurel Heights UMW
with a Five Star Certificate for giving to missions.

UMW Treasurer, Annalynn Jackson ,
holds the Five Star Certificate.



LAUREL HEIGHTS
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS. OPEN DOORS.





Have you ever wondered

who takes care of preparing the sanctuary for worship? Who polishes the candlesticks or changes the cloths on the altar to the liturgical season color? Are you curious to learn about liturgical seasons? The Altar Guild would love to share their knowledge with you! The upcoming workdays would be a great opportunity to learn more about the Altar Guild!

Call the church office @ 210-733-7156 for more information.

ALTAR GUILD WORK DAYS

Saturday, November 21 at noon

we will polish the brass, arrange the Thanksgiving table on the altar, and answer any questions from visitors that may join us to help.

Saturday, December 5 at 9:00 am

Decorating the chrismon tree.

Sunday, December 13 from 3 to 5 pm

Finish placing and arranging poinsettias in the chancel area.



Poinsettias in December

I/ We wish to make a donation of \$15 to help purchase poinsettia plants to decorate and beautify the sanctuary in December. This gift is given...

in honor of _____

in memory of _____

My name: _____

Phone: _____

Include this coupon with your check made payable to Laurel Heights UMC and mail to LHUMC, Attn: Bookkeeper, 227 W. Woodlawn, San Antonio, TX 78212.

Or pay online on our website: www.laurelheights.org

Deadline: Tuesday, December 8, 2020



Family Gratitude Gathering

On Saturday, the families with young children in our church family celebrated a Gratitude Gathering. Each family had an opportunity to visit the sanctuary, lighting a candle or gathering around the font for a blessing. Their visit was rounded out by a visit to the prayer wall to tie on a colorful ribbon to say Thank You to God.



We celebrated **Children's Sabbath** on November 15. The name of each child in our care was written on a colorful paper hand and we will be praying for each child by name. If you would like a hand (or handful of hands) to be mailed to you so that you can pray for the child/children, please call the church office at 210-733-7156. Or email Laura Healy at lhealy@mylhumc.org and she will see mail them to you.



HOLIDAY BOOK DRIVE

Is there a children's book you love that you always wanted to share?

For the holidays this year we will be collecting new children's books for the Christian Assistance Ministries Christmas Store. For families in need, books can be a luxury. Every year CAM provides a festive store where their clients can choose toys, books and gifts for their children. CAM's need is great.

They are hoping to collect 500 books by **Sunday, December 7th**.

You may donate new children's books to the church by dropping them off at the reception desk or call Laura Healy for other drop off options.

You can also order books from Amazon and have them shipped directly to the church.

**If you have any questions,
please contact Laura Healy
@ 210-364-7206**



PRAYER WALK

As you walk along the sidewalk on the corner of Woodlawn and Belknap, you will find words for prayer and reflection.

Worship on Sunday, November 22



Our 11 a.m. service of worship will be livestreamed on our website and Facebook page.

Due to a rise in new cases of Covid-19 in our community we will not be gathering in person this Sunday. Please see our website <https://www.laurelheights.org/> for details regarding the Laurel Heights UMC surveillance metric.

Thank you for your patience, understanding, and vigilance.

Giving to Laurel Heights



Online Gifts: Please visit our website, , <https://www.laurelheights.org/give/>

Text to Give:

Please text "LHUMC" to 73256.

Checks: Please mail to

LHUMC, Attn: Bookkeeper 227 W. Woodlawn, SATX, 78212.

Laurel Heights United Methodist Church Finance Committee Update Y-T-D 2020

| Budget Receipts: | October | Y-T-D |
|------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Contributions Received | \$62,508.68 | \$613,671.12 |
| Other Receipts | \$5,692.80 | \$75,591.89 |
| Total Budget Receipts: | \$68,201.48 | \$689,263.01 |
| Budget Expenses: | \$62,361.72 | \$701,807.59 |
| Ahead (Behind): | \$5,839.76 | -\$12,544.58 |
| PPP Loan Proceeds | \$0.00 | \$101,074.93 |
| Trustee Loan -2018 | | \$75,000.00 |
| Paid 1/1/19 | | (\$20,000.00) |
| Balance Due: | | \$55,000.00 |

Volunteer

FIND
YOUR MISSION



There are so many ways to serve God in our community! Here are some of the opportunities for service available this week.

CHURCH UNDER THE BRIDGE

CUB is currently collecting new or gently used hats, gloves and scarves to be given to anyone attending their Christmas night service. We will be conducting a drive through collection event for these items on Sunday, November 29 in the Woodlawn parking lot from 10:00AM to 1:00PM and on December 3 from 1:00-3:00PM.

HOLIDAY BOOK DRIVE

As our holiday giving this year, we are collecting new children's books for the Christian Assistance Ministries Christmas Store for their clients. Books can be delivered to the church during regular office hours.

We are halfway through November--Thanksgiving is upon us and the first Sunday of Advent is right around the corner! Time flies by quickly at this time of year and the Mission Committee wants to keep our congregation up to date on our Missions of the Month and especially, our missions of the moment.

One of our ongoing missions, Church Under the Bridge, has been an integral part of our outreach since its inception in 1997. "The ministry of CUB provides physical and spiritual food every night for 200 people who are homeless or experiencing food insecurity." Julie Mazel continues to spearhead our involvement by preparing and collecting sandwiches and snacks on the first Thursday of the month. CUB is currently collecting new or gently used hats, gloves and scarves to be given to anyone attending their Christmas night service. We will be conducting a drive for these items on Sunday, November 29 with drive through collection in the Woodlawn parking lot from 10:00AM to 1:00PM and on December 3 from 1:00-3:00PM.

Don't forget—you can still make contributions to our November Mission of the Month, CROP Hunger Walk, by designating it in your offering to Laurel Heights. You may also make contributions at www.crophungerwalk.org year-round.

**MISSION
COMMITTEE**

Thank you, and may your hearts be warmed by your love and care for others.

Laurel Heights Online

Sunday Worship Livestream @ 11:00 a.m.

The livestream will be available for viewing at <https://www.laurelheights.org/online-worship/> and Facebook.com/LaurelHeightsUMC



Sunday School

Children's Sunday school videos can be viewed anytime at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/7425915/>

Adult Sunday school classes meet by Zoom.

Call (210) 974-1834 to find out more!



November 26—December 2

11/26
Lorraine Miller

11/28
Karla Galindo
Stacy Halim
Marisandra Madrigal

11/29
Jabob Dixon
Tom Morton
Jason Salazar

11/30
Janice Davis
Darla Peek

12/2
Vicki Ferguson



JOYS AND CONCERNS

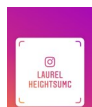
Healing: Deanna Adams (*Shirley Carter*), Billie Arredondo, Matt Carr and family (*Jim Carr*), Nathan Gaddis (*Bert Clayton*), Concha Garces (*Teresa Garces*), Juan Garces (*Teresa Garces*), Bobby and Ruth Garcia (*Clyta Coder*), Marvin Gregory (*Carrie Clemens*), Mary Lou Hildebrand (*Mary Verette*), Larry Howard, Annalynn Jackson, Mary Grace Ketner (*Janice Clayton*), Lucien Manchester, May O'Neal, Marjorie Parrigan, Natalie, Richard and Roxie Rocha, Doug Semmes, Bill Shepard (*Janice Clayton*), Nora Winkler.

God's Presence: for our country, parents, teachers and students both face to face and remote, 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.



Contact Us

To reach the office staff by phone, please call (210) 733-7156.



For an appointment with Yvonne Garcia, RN, our Wesley Nurse, please call (210) 272-7921.



Www.LaurelHeights.org

Lord, in your mercy, hear our PRAYER

You can offer a prayer of gratitude or concern by emailing prayers@mylhumc.org, through [Facebook Messenger](#), or calling the church office (210) 733-7156.