



The Messenger

January 27, 2021
Volume 45, Issue 4

A weekly publication of Laurel Heights United Methodist Church

The tongues of the wise

The month of January is named for Janus, Roman mythology's god of gates and doorways. Overseeing threshold moments—beginnings, transitions, endings—the two-headed deity is often depicted looking backward with one head and forward with the other. It is a posture befitting the first month of the year, when we generally focus our attention as much on the year just past as the year unfolding.



This particular January's public discourse, defined right away by a siege on the nation's Capitol on the day of Epiphany, has had us looking backward perhaps more than usual, searching the archives of previous years for indications of how and where invective and diatribe may have seeded the deeply disturbed behavior of an angry mob. What we could easily overlook in seeking that causal relationship between words and deeds is that words themselves are perfectly capable of causing harm without any assistance from deeds. To put it another way, hurtful words are themselves a sort of angry mob, with the same destructive power. "Some wound as they speak, like swords," our collective wisdom reminds us (Proverbs 12:18a).

Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can really hurt me is an inversion of the children's rhyme I have always thought more accurate than the original version. But if words can hurt, they also possess tremendous capacities for healing: "I am sorry." "Please forgive me." "I respect your right to hold an opinion different than mine." "Help me understand better what you mean." "Let's keep talking about this." "Can you share with me where you learned that?" "Can I share with you where I learned this?" "Now I'm beginning to see your perspective." These sorts of words are what Vernard Eller would call rocks in the whirlpool of fevered dialogue, lessening its force, slowing its spin. The earlier proverb completes its dire description on a far more hopeful note: "Some wound as they speak, like swords; but the tongues of the wise heal."

I pray that in this looking back/looking forward January moment we as people of God will seek to heed wisdom's call to heal with our tongues, replacing ridicule with respect, and blame with blessing.

Grace and peace.



Staff Love Offering and Notes of Appreciation



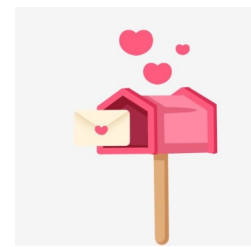
The Staff-Parish Relations Committee is inviting the congregation to offer gifts of appreciation to our tremendous church staff. Through a year of extraordinary challenges and obstacles they have continued to guide us in worship, learning, serving, and witness with patience, determination, energy, and creativity.

Gifts can be made to the church online through a designated "Staff Love Offering" option in the pull-down tab on the giving page (<https://onrealm.org/LaurelHeightsUn/-/give/now>), or mailed to the attention of Amy Caldwell, bookkeeper.

Financial gifts will be received between now and Sunday, February 14th, Valentine's Day, and will be presented to the staff the following week. You're also encouraged to send cards or letters of encouragement and gratitude during this same period.

Thank you for sharing in this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to those who work so very hard to serve and lead the Laurel Heights congregation.

Ann McGlone, SPRC chair



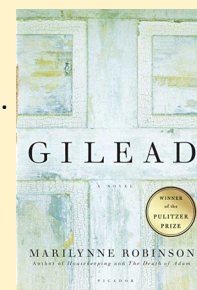
ZOOM BOOK STUDY ON "GILEAD" TO BEGIN FEBRUARY 14

Plans are underway to launch a Zoom book study at Laurel Heights on four Sunday nights, beginning on February 14. The Rev. Dr. Mark Doty, who served three congregations in the Rio Texas Conference before his retirement, will lead the study of Gilead, the Pulitzer Prize winning novel written by Marilynne Robinson and published in 2004. Gilead is the first of four novels in a series which details the history of a pastor's family. The Zoom class will meet from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM on each of the evenings.

Mark moved back to San Antonio last summer and united with LHUMC, having served Jefferson UMC in the late 80's. His Ph.D. in English from Indiana University specialized in 20th century American literature. Mark had the pleasure of hosting Ms. Robinson at his church in Maine in 2005 and regards her as one of our finest writers. She has become a good friend of President Barack Obama and was awarded the National Humanities Medal by him in 2012 for "her grace and intelligence in writing."

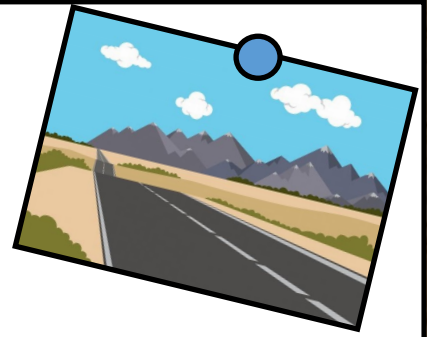
Copies of Gilead are available through local bookstores or by ordering from Amazon. In order to register for the Zoom class, please call the Church Office.

If you have any questions, please contact Laura Healy lhealy@mylhumc.org.





Notes from the
Faith Journey



As many of you know, I'm a doctor. Not surprisingly, this year has been the most challenging of my 30-year career. I've had critically ill patients, colleagues getting sick and even dying, and I've worried about getting sick myself. In late December, when the Covid vaccine became available, I was so grateful to be able to be in the first group to receive it. I was reminded of the importance of gratitude.

In church, I've always thought of gratitude as just being grateful to God. But I saw a patient recently for her last visit before her planned delivery the following week, and she took the time to thank us for taking care of her, and for how safe and cared for she felt in our office. It didn't make all of the bad things go away, but it was just what I needed to hear, and it made me realize the importance of expressing gratitude to others.

One thing I'm grateful for is that my friend Randy dropped off a bag around Christmas-time that had, among other things, candles. My family has made it a habit to go to the late Christmas Eve service, and I have said it isn't Christmas until we process outside to the porch and sing Silent Night with our candles. So this Christmas Eve at home, we turned out the lights, lit our candles, and sang Silent Night. As I looked around at my family, we were all in tears, and I realized that while it wasn't the same, and it wasn't perfect, at that time, it was enough.

I am so grateful to God for my church, for my pastor, through whom God's love shines so brightly, you can feel it through a computer screen, and for all of you who have kept me in your hearts and prayers even though we haven't seen each other in person. And that for now, that's enough.

Melinda Hartson



All are Welcome!

Thursday, January 28 – SUPER ADULT DAY

As you may well expect there is not much in the way of gathering until we're rid of this pandemic. However, we can look forward to Thursday, January 28 for another meeting in the Woodlawn Parking Lot.

We'll gather at 11 o'clock to celebrate the Feast of the Three Kings. The traditional one in the gym was another victim of the "no large gatherings rule." Park your car on the lot, bring a chair to sit on in front of your car (do not congregate), or we'll have a chair for you. The Three Kings will circle the lot singing "We Three Kings." We'll all join in singing the refrain and the 1st and last verses.



Lunch will be
Roast Beef Sandwich
Relishes
Chips
King's Cake for Dessert
Cost \$5.00



Even though, hopefully, we'll all have had our vaccine by then it will be necessary to wear a mask and practice social distancing. Please let us know you are coming so we have plenty of food. Call 210-872-8031.

LHUMC Mission of the Month - January 2021

Guillermo Berman, Missionary

Our Mission of the Month for January is Missionary Guillermo Berman. He directs the Manos Juntas Ministry which is a part of the Methodist Church of Mexico and ministers to people living near Reynosa and Matamoras. It is a multi-faceted ministry with ongoing projects to provide a better life for the people of Mexico.

Missionary Berman and Manos Juntas are supported by UMC Global Ministries and donations and volunteer teams from the United States and other countries.

You may donate to the Mission of the Month online at <https://www.laurelheights.org/give/>

Or mail to
LHUMC, Attn: Bookkeeper
227 W. Woodlawn, SATX, 78212



Welcome!

Maverick McGlone born to
Alicia and Benson McGlone
on January 20.

NEW MEMBERS

Paul Bishop and Lauren Fuller joined January 23.
They transferred their memberships from
St. Paul's UMC in Houston to LHUMC.

Celebrating the adoption of Landon and Lila,
into the family of Lacey and William Crawford.

Wednesday Prayer Service

January 27

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 us.

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

Click on this link: <https://www.zoom.us/j/130214408>

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



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.

Thank you, Laurel Heights, for your faithfulness in giving.

January 29—February 4

1/30

Peter Bowman
Riley Garza

1/31

Omar Medina

2/1

Marlow Parker
Wells Shaw

2/4

Susan Holloway



JOYS AND CONCERNS

Healing: Tony Arredondo, Betty Benson, Whit Birdsong (*Kitty Grantham*), Jim Crews, Jeanne Coder, Gena (*Thad Dorsey*), Marvin Huth, Annalynn Jackson, Tom Kurtz, Lucien Manchester, Joe and Shelley McMullen, Charlie Murphy, (*Stephanie's father*), Melissa Nardi, May O'Neal, Charlie Piland (*Julie Mazel*), Doug Semmes, Bob Walden.

Those Who Mourn:

Liz Escamila on the death of her mother, Ginna Lynd.

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,



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.



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