

The Messenger

January 25, 2023 Volume 55, Issue 4

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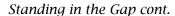
Standing in the Gap

by Byrd Bonner

As I listened to Mark Doty's honest and confessional words on Sunday, I was taken back to moments in my journey in the UMC that have given opportunity for challenge, grief, change and healing. In the 22nd chapter of Ezekiel in the First Testament many translators and commentators use a phrase from this oracle to Jerusalem that often surfaces today. God laments a search for one to "stand in the gap" referring to a breach in a wall to save Jerusalem from ruin. He found no one. No one.

My journey as a United Methodist is unique, broad, rich. I have been given the gift to serve at every level of the church. I have been the first elected lay delegate to the policy-making General Conference and the last elected alternate to the bishop-electing Jurisdictional Conference. I have been chosen to preach about repentance and racial reconciliation in the Cleveland Convention Arena and I have privately sobbed in a basement hallway of a Cincinnati hotel at the realization that for denominations divided over race "unity" did not mean merger. I have been challenged about my faithfulness to scripture at policy-making tables and I have gotten to call the Church to accountability in matters of human rights in Somalia and the Sudan. I have petitioned corporate boards of directors to include women and persons of color at their tables and have gladly stepped forward for election to church offices over women and persons of color. As I look back God has presented me with <u>a lot</u> of gaps.

In listening to Mark's words of pain and rebirth, I again realized my comfort, in a way, in gaps. I have been asked many times in recent weeks about my "take" on the disaffiliation of United Methodist congregations. I realized in trying to piece words together that my greatest fear is that the UMC may no longer seek or have gaps to stand in— at least not as before.





In my political life in the UMC (a very accurate description), I have appreciated the support from those of many perspectives. When I entered that fray (also a very accurate description) I was young and I had visibility throughout the Church for my ecumenical and interfaith commitments. I was pulled into positions because I was young, a public speaker, and, truth be told, white. As the Conference looked for a 'next generation' to add to leadership, my uniqueness as a lay ecumenist presented the first gap. 'It's okay. He'll come around." was the murmur around the room. I didn't. Next, my growing confession of white privilege and naming and confessing the sin of racism that still fractures our Church and world was a big gap. "It's okay. He'll come around." I didn't. Next, my unwavering tolerance and support for LGBTQI rights, leadership and legislation was a gap. The murmur around the room? Crickets.

I have sat elbow to elbow with top leaders and writers of the most progressive movements of the UMC and top leaders and writers of the conservative (even reactionary) movements of the UMC. I have listened to and have loved them, and they me. I have eaten and received sacrament with them. The UMC has been the host and catalyst for so many gaps. May that continue to be a source of her strength as God needs us all to stand, not on one side or the other but, in the gap. Creator God, May the gaps continue to be our comfort zones. Amen.



May Parish O'Neal Memorial Service

Saturday, January 28, 2023 at 10:30 A.M. Laurel Heights UMC Sanctuary.

Reception to follow in Fellowship Hall.



Alex Hooper-Shaffer Memorial Service

Monday, January 30, 2023 at 2:00 P.M. Laurel Heights UMC Sanctuary.



Flavio Garcia

Rosary Monday, January 30th at 6:30pm Castillo Funeral Home 520 N. General McMullen

Funeral Mass Tuesday, January 31st at 10am St. Leo the Great Catholic Church 119 Octavia



Sunday Worship Services

Come and See... Worship Experience Fourth Sunday of Epiphany Sunday, 9:00-9:30 a.m. January 29, 2023 Sermon: Rev. Lisa Straus Song Leader & Liturgist: Anaiah Lupton Montano

Fellowship Gathering 9:30am to 10am Fellowship Hall

> Coffee, Tea & Light Refreshments

Thank you Super Adults for providing snacks & refreshments during Fellowship time on Sunday, January 29.

Nursery care is available from 8:45am to 12:30pm

Sunday School for all ages 10am to 10:45am

Look for signs to various classrooms

9:30am to 10:30am

Certain Adult Groups

Worship / 11am / Sanctuary

The 11 am service is live-streamed at:

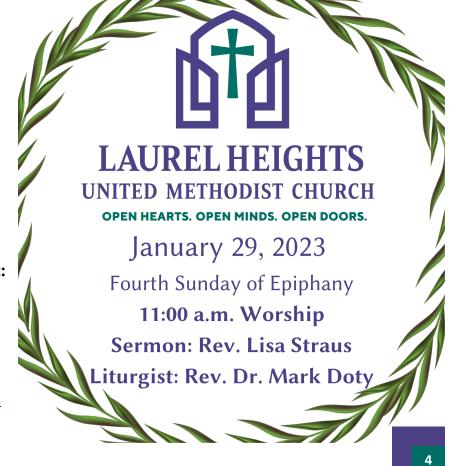
https://www.laurelheights.org/onlineworship/

and on our Facebook page

https://

www.facebook.comLaurelHeightsUMC

Beginning at 11am.



JOYS AND CONCERNS

Healing: Lucien Manchester,
Daniel "Stump" Sowada and Nancy Jones,
Jerry Geerdes, Spencer Fuller (Kay Carter),
Sonny Landers (Landers Family),
Hannah Marina Campen
Mary Beth Garay
Richard Parrigan
Natasha Garza
Bruce Davis (Clyta Coder)
Flavio Garcia Family
Jesse Fernandez
Aleene Block

God's Presence: For those affected by the COVID-19 virus; homebound members; the incarcerated; and women and men in our military.

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.

Sanctuary Offering



Online Giving

<u>Please visit our website:</u> <u>http://www.laurelheights.org/give/</u>

MANY WAYS TO GIVE AT LAUREL HEIGHTS UMC



Or use our QR code





"LHUMC" 73256

Text to

http://www.laurelheights.org/give/

Church Calendar

Wednesday, January 25

9:00 a.m. Exercise Class - Rm. 312

6:30 p.m. Financial Planning Course - Parlor

7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary

Thursday, January 26

9:00 a.m. Church Mice 10:30 a.m. Super Adult Day - *Gym* 6:00 p.m. Tai Chai Class

Friday, January 27

9:00 Exercise Class - Rm. 312

Saturday, January 28

10:30 a.m. May O'Neal Memorial & Reception

Sunday, January 29

9:00 a.m. Come and See Worship - Sanctuary 9:30 a.m. Fellowship - Dining Room 10:00 a.m. Sunday School - Various Rooms 11:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary

Monday, January 30

9:00 a.m. Exercise Class - Rm. 312 2:00 p.m. Hooper-Shaffer Memorial Service 5:30 p.m. Board of Trustees Mtg. - *Parlor*

Tuesday, January 31

10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 2:00 p.m. Tuesday Musical Series - *Sanctuary*

Wednesday, February 1

9:00 a.m. Exercise Class - Rm. 312 6:30 p.m. Financial Planning Course - Parlor 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary





LHUMC Pickleball

Thanks to everyone who helped make Saturday's Pickleball Launch Party a success!

Our players ranged in age from 7-70. Whether you were in the game or on the sidelines, it was a great day with lots of hot dogs, chips, pickles, and most of all - community.

Our next step is to staff Wednesdays 4:30-7 pm and Saturdays 10 am-noon with volunteer hosts in February and March. Ann and Mike McGlone have committed to Saturday, March 4. Sign UP to host.

Please know volunteer hosts are welcome to play. We just need to have someone in the space to help set up and take down the nets and make the paddles and balls

available. There will be church staff on site at these times as well.

Blessings and thanks,

Wyndee

Pickleball Survey

Scan the QR Code



LIKE TO SING? JOIN THE CHANCEL CHOIR

Now is the time to join the Music Ministry by becoming a member of the Chancel Choir!

We are a diverse group that embraces many musical styles to celebrate God's love for all!

Rehearsals are Wednesdays, 7p-8:30p in the Music Room, Sunday warm-up at 10:30a in Sanctuary.

Questions? Ask any choir member, or reach out to Music Director, Laura Marty, after the 11:00a service or via email, lmarty@mylhumc.org.





12 FEBRUARY 2023 9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Laurel Heights UMC Gymnasium 227 W. Woodawn Dr. San Antonio, TX 78212

For more information, call 210-272-7921

Happy Birthday

January 26 - 31

1/26 Laura Healy

1/27
Janice Clayton
Georgia Ferguson

1/29 Ilda Gennero Nan Shelden

1/30
Peter Bowman
Ryley Garza
Anthony Mercado

1/31 Omar Medina

Are we missing your name on the birthday list? Please notify the church office at 210-733-7156 so we can update our records. We don't want to miss anyone!

Church Office Hours

9:00am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday

Contact Us

To reach the office staff by phone, please call 210-733-7156 or email.

> Rev. Lisa Straus Senior Pastor

lstraus@mylhumc.org

Rev. Laura Healy
Associate Pastor
lhealy@mylhumc.org

Rev. Wyndee Holbrook Pastor in Residence wyndee@interfaithsaa.org

Laura Marty, Music Director lmarty@mylhumc.org

Dr. Melanie Randall, Organist mrandall@mylhumc.org

Heather Weidenbach Administrative Manager heatherw@mylhumc.org

Debbie Cormier, PT Assistant debbie@mylhumc.org

Susan Holloway
Super Adults Director
susanbholloway@gmail.com

Wesley Nurse Yvonne Garcia ygarcia@mhm.org 210-272-7921