the Westlake UMC 🕈 Newsletter



I'm making plans for Annual Conference, my kids are counting down the days until school's end, and (while the cooler days have extended their stay this year) the temperature and the humidity are slowly creeping up. Yep. Summer's coming! With summer comes: vacation, summer camps, mission trips, and a much-needed change of pace. A slower pace, hopefully!

This summer as we relax into a new rhythm and stretch into a more spacious living, I invite you to sink more deeply into some familiar Bible stories. Remember all those dramatic stories you heard in Sunday School as a child? Spectacular stories of talking donkeys, love betrayed, felled giants, murderous lions, and walls tumbling down? When's the last time you read those stories? Have you reflected on them as an adult? They're rarely, if ever, preached from the pulpit.

Among the responses to the Sermon Planning Surveys were many wonderings about stories and God's nature in the Old Testament. So, our Summer Worship Series, "Not Your Mama's Bible Stories!" takes a second look. We will explore these stories through adult eyes. Who knows? Maybe we'll discover an unexpected richness or a fresh insight!

"Not Your Mama's Bible Stories!" begins on Sunday, July 8th.

Remember! You don't have to miss worship just because it's summer. We prefer to see your happy face in person, but if you're traveling or will miss worship, you can livestream either worship service or watch them later in the week at https://livestream.com/westlakeumc.

See you in worship!

Pastor Tracey tbeadle@westlake-umc.org

July 8: Balaam and his Donkey July 15: The Walls of Jericho July 22: Samson and Delilah July 29: Ruth and Naomi

August 5: David and Goliath
August 12: Shadrach, Meshach
& Abednego
August 19: Daniel in the Lions' Den







When I was young and looking forward to something, or dreading it, my mother would have me keep track of the "lasts". As I dreaded the end of the school year, I would think about my last reading group, my last recess, my last bus ride. Before summer camp, I would excitedly think about my last bike ride, my last dinner with my family, or my last sleep in my room. I kept up this practice as I graduated from high school, left for college, and got married. I continued it with my own children as we moved from California to Austin and Austin to Boston. While I no longer have children at home, and the dog and the husband don't seem interested in playing my game, I find myself turning to this practice of counting the "lasts" as a sort of farewell ritual that brings me comfort. By the time this has been printed and mailed to you, I will have already led my last staff meeting, attended my last Abiding in the Vine, and written my last newsletter article. When the District Superintendent called me on behalf of the Bishop way back in March, these lasts seemed so far away. I was sure I would have time to say goodbye to everyone, to experience my "last" with each one of you. Time is growing short, and the feasibility of accomplishing this seems impossible now. Please know, wherever I go, I carry you all in my heart. WUMC has had a tremendous influence upon who I am as a pastor, but more importantly, as a child of God. I am so grateful...that, in this crazy world where so many paths lie before us, my path has intersected with yours, not once but twice. I am so grateful...that we are an Easter people and we do not believe that goodbye's are final. I am so grateful... for each and every one of you.

Farewell to Pastor Lisa

Jay Brim

Pastor Lisa's Next Gig Starts July 1 – We pastoral family to lead it as it grows. reluctantly but hopefully wave 'so long' to Pastor Lisa as she leaves to become the senior pastor at Buda UMC. on July 1. Her time here as a member, then ministry candidate and student, then Associate Pastor, has made her and her family part and parcel of WUMC. Lisa, Jim, Jessup and Zephyr we love you and will miss you, but know that Buda is getting a great

Come help us say goodbye and wish them well on June 10 in the gym during the Sunday School Hour. The SPRC will be collecting love gifts to help them make the transition to Buda more smoothly, and to thank them for all they have done for WUMC!

Gifts that Grow

Erin Cowden

Long ago, Jesus told a parable that illustrates in perpetuity, and the resulting income how the Kingdom of Heaven is like a tiny bit of yeast that makes dough rise up until it spills out all over. Similarly, our church has a special pot that we call The Permanent Endowment Fund (PEF), which provides a way to make diverse and enduring types of charitable gifts that advance our Christian mission.

Contributions into the PEF are invested \$750 to the New Life Institute:

is dedicated to supporting programs and needs that are not normally included in our church's annual operating budget. This year, the PEF Committee is excited to report that the sum of \$4,900.00 USD was distributed to the following worthy organizations:

\$2,000 to the Emergency Response Team; \$800 to the Christi Center;

\$300 to "Got Nets?"; \$300 to the Global Youth Initiative; \$750 to support staff and speakers attendance at the All-Church Retreat.

Just as bread dough rises over time, the money in the PEF grows exponentially. Over the next few years, our little church will distribute increasing amounts of income. If you are aware of a program worthy to receive a gift, please make your request by going to the church website, click the heading titled, "Give," and then drop down to "Endowment."

Distribution requests are considered around the end of each calendar year (November/ December).

Contributions to the PEF are welcome at any time of the year. Donations can take many forms, including cash, stocks, bonds, life insurance, real estate or even deferred gifts, such as bequests in a will or trust. To make your gift to the PEF, simply earmark your check "PEF" and place it in the offering plate, or contact a committee member to arrange a non-cash transfer.

Everyone Has a Home Here

Marina Sifuentes

On Palm Sunday, WUMC member Louise Morse shared with us how church teachings made her feel God was against her as a lesbian, but how she later learned she was a beloved child of God. It took over 40 years as a member of WUMC for her to trust that the church would accept her as God had. WUMC can take steps to ensure that nobody else will doubt our welcome.

The Reconciling Ministries Network is a biblically and theologically centered Wesleyan movement. The RMN strives to live out the Gospel's teachings of grace, love, and justice for all God's children, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons.

Why should WUMC join the RMN? We already welcome anybody who walks in, but LGBTQ persons do not know this before walking in our door. Walking in the door may seem dangerous to those who already feel rejected by Christian churches. Though we smile and pass the peace to all visitors, they may worry our smiles will disappear if we learn of their sexual orientation. Will we whisper to our neighbors? Might we even ask them to leave?

In joining RMN, we publicize our inclusive nature, telling LGBTQ persons they have a home here. People use the RMN directory of churches to find a church that will embrace them as part of the body of Christ, regardless of sexual orientation.

Currently, Journeys, Perspectives and Family Foundations classes (and thus their members) have joined RMN, as has the Chancel Choir. If, as an individual, you personally want to openly welcome all seekers, please go to the RMN site and join westlake-umc.org/rmn. No contribution is required to join. If you'd like to show your support at WUMC, you may want to add a rainbow sticker - available in the narthex to your nametag.



I'm selfish. Basic human-nature selfish, but a lot of times my first thought - even if it is subconscious - is What's in it for me?

Several months ago, I was asked to join the Youth Discernment Committee, which has been tasked with revamping the way we serve our youth. Not a super flashy committee title so my first thought was something like - What's in it for me? The answer: One of my friends is asking so I feel obligated. Also, I have a fifth grader who I want to stay involved. It was all about ME.

A funny thing happened along the way, though. I went to breakfast with the youth group and was blown away by the humor, intelligence, drive, maturity and motivation of the students with whom I shared tacos. They were the opposite of the picture today's media paints. I've also now been in many meetings with youth who feel invested enough in WUMC to give up their precious time to share their hopes and concerns.

Here's what I've learned. They need us. They are overwhelmed by academic and societal pressure. Many of them feel disconnected from their faith and don't know how to get their questions answered. Their friends are super important and they feel torn between

spending time at church and spending time with friends. They need us to help them feel connected. And, here's the kicker - they want to be connected to US, not just to their friends.

But, we're all human here, so What's in it for us? Research shows that children who leave the church oftentimes don't come back as adults. A healthy congregation means we need our youth to feel connected. Plus, many of us have children or grandchildren - we want them to draw closer as they get older, not pull farther away.

Over the next few months, our committee will be reaching out to teach you what we are learning and to ask you to engage in the process. I know that you'll be blown away by the resource we have in our youth and that your heart will be called to help them with their needs. If you want to know more or want to get involved now contact Pastor Tracey at TBeadle@westlake-umc.org. And, if you enter into the learning process with an attitude of What's in it for me?, that's okay. I feel confident that by the end of it you'll be like me - no longer concerned with What's in it for me? because I've learned that the answer is EVERYTHING.



The Westlake UMC Youth ministry summer is packed with fun, discipleship, and service! This year we have a weekly fun event for all 6-12 grades every Sunday evening. These include an outdoor movie, scavenger hunts, fishing, slip n slide and more. These are great opportunities for youth to try out the youth group and bring friends!

We will continue to meet each week on Sundays for Sunday Connect from 10:10-11:05. This summer we are having High School Students trade off leading a lesson on a cause or passion that they have. We will engage in understanding it better and even move into some action that can come out of it! We also have weekly gatherings to have fun and go deeper together. Middle School Lakeside is every Wednesday 6-7:30pm at Lake Hills Park and High School Lunch group is every Tuesday from 12-1:30pm in the Village. These are casual times to understand God's word together!

And of course we have our trips to Six Flags (June 18) and Schlitterbahn (July 30) our VBS service and Post VBS Fun as well as our Middle School mission trip to San Antonio with Blueprint Ministries and our High School mission trip to North Carolina with ReCreation Experiences.

Diane Kofahl youth@westlake-umc.org Dr. Diana Sanchez-Bushong dsanchez-bushong@westlake-umc.org

Frank Webster jfrankweb@gmail.com

Dr. Gus Sterneman gsterneman@westlake-umc.org

Jazz Sunday is June 3rd and you won't want to miss it! If you like listening to great jazz musicians and sing some of our well-known hymns in jazz style than this is the service for you!

The Chancel Choir will continue to offer musical leadership in June and will on culminate on July 1st with a Hymns Festival! Then the choir will take a break until mid August. This gives others the opportunity to share music in worship. Soloists (vocal or instrumental), ensembles, duets, Sunday school classes are all welcome to take a Sunday to share music. If you would like to get on the schedule for July and early August please contact Diana. We will begin regular Wednesday night rehearsal in mid-August and encourage anyone who loves music to come join us, no audition necessary! Come hear God's word in song this summer and plan on joining us in the Fall.

MUSICAL MONDAYS in JUNE

June is a great time to gather and make music in a relaxed fun setting. Each Monday in June from 6:30pm-8:00pm we will be hosting a musical interactive event at the church. Here's the lineup! Come to one or all of them and bring a friend!

Guitars & More Jam! Bring your guitar or instrument of choice and let's make music! We will gather in the gym and sing songs of all kinds. Bring the family and let's jam! Our refreshment bar will feature jams and jellies with crackers and other finger foods!

Drum Fun! We will have a drumming circle led by "Come Drum" for Fun leader Mae Stoll! This is a great interactive event for the whole family. Cookies and snacks will be served.

Beer and Hymns! Let's gather to sing some of our favorite hymns! In addition we will be serving Rootbeer floats.

Uke it up! Ukulele is great fun and even if you don't play you can come sing and play a percussion instrument. If you get here early you can use one of our ukes and strum along! Along with singing and playing we will be sharing jokes so dust off your best joke and be prepared to get on stage and share it. This evening we will be serving Gummy bears and popcorn.

Summer Schoolhouse

Megan Getman



Plans are in place for Vacation Bible School and the last details and trainings are beginning to happen. We are looking forward to having a fun- and faith-filled week with all the children who will be joining us between June 11-15. There will be songs, games, crafts, bread, laughter, learning, and lots of smiles to be had. Surrounding it all will be God's presence and love. This year's theme is Galilee by the Sea. We'll have a blast learning all about Jesus' ministry as he and his disciples traveled along the seashore and sailed the Sea of Galilee.

Children's Ministry will be hosting a one-room schoolhouse each Sunday during the typical education hour. We'll have great crafts, games, and activities so that we can explore the bible stories in a variety of different ways and help us connect God to our daily lives. I know summer is a time for lots of adventures outside and play time with friends. I look forward to hearing all the stories from these exciting adventures when you come and rest at church.

Megan Getman mgetman@westlake-umc.org Mary Lou Batlan mlbatlan@gmail.com The Prayer Shawl Ministry let us use hand-made gifts to "wrap another person in prayer and love." The shawls may be knitted, crocheted, quilted, or other ways of hand-home-making them. We are looking for those who might be interested in sharing talents this way. Please contact Mary Lou, mlbatlan@gmail.com if you are interested in learning more. We will bless the first one received this year on the first Sunday in May. Here is the Prayer of Blessing: www.shawlministry. com "May God's grace be upon this shawl...warming, comforting, enfolding and embracing. May this mantle be a safe haven...a sacred place of security and well-being...sustaining and embracing in good times as well as difficult ones. May the one who receives this shawl be cradled in hope, kept in joy, graced with peace, and wrapped in love. Blessed Be!" Also, let us know if you or someone else would appreciate receiving a Prayer Shawl.

Whirlwind Fun at WUMP

Laura Clemens

Laura Clemens lclemens@westlake-umc.org



Westlake United Methodist Preschool has just finished the 2017-2018 school year. The last few weeks have been a whirlwind of activity as we celebrated the Week of the Young Child with a story-teller, drum circles, a petting zoo, parades and our Family Night and Silent Auction. We also ended the year with classroom picnics, parties and scavenger hunts. Our pre-K students attended their last Chapel service, followed by a Sending Forth parade. It's an exciting time, but bittersweet as we say good-bye to our friends.

We will be offering summer classes for six weeks over the summer. We also have limited class openings for the coming school year. There are openings in our Tuesday/Thursday classes for three year-olds and in our pre-K classes. Please contact Director Laura Clemens at lclemens@westlake-umc.org if you're interested.

Financial Update

Corey Blahuta

I am happy to report that the financial results through the first three months of 2018 are very positive. Overall giving was at 130% of our 2018 year to date projections. Almost all of that overage was the result of a significant number of 2018 pledges that were paid before

year end 2017, presumably for tax planning purposes. Overall expenses were below budget levels with the only significant deviation from budget was for improvements necessary to prepare a portion of Building M for a new tenant.

Q1 Summary	Actual	Budget	Difference
Revenue	\$383,509	\$293,226	\$90,283
Expenses	\$277,023	\$286,525	\$9,503
Net Income	\$106,486	\$6,701	\$99,785



Our Gift is Serving Others

David Graham

We at Westlake Methodist watched first with relief as Harvey stalled 120 miles south of us, but then in horror as it sat and swirled for days over homes in Victoria. As soon as Rio Texas conference initiated Early Response Team (ERT) efforts, we decided we had to respond.

The membership of Victoria UMC could not be any more hospitable in sharing the campus of the church. The kitchen is fully ours to use, and we have moved from the floor to blow up mattresses and now to bunkbeds with spring mattresses. And it's so clean. After spending a day in some very dirty settings, it is nice to come back to a place where one can walk barefoot.

There has never been any doubt that we are serving the least the last and the lost in Victoria. Single moms looking for a dry clean place to lay their babies down, a family that is in a lease to purchase arrangement only to find out that the landlord failed to have insurance, or the lady who cried because she was too ashamed to show us the inside of her house because the rain had ravaged everything or the man who was so crippled that he could not come to the door.

Westlake UMC ERT has deployed 14 times into Victoria for an average of 4 days per deployment. We have completed 72 homes. This would not be possible without the

inclusive nature to FUMC of Victoria and Westlake UMC. WUMC has teamed up with volunteers from Lake Travis, Tarrytown, Pflugerville, Llano, FUMC Austin, Marble Falls, San Marcus, Arizona and Northern California, just to name a few.

As the summer approaches, we are now shifting from ERT efforts to rebuilding. The roof tarps will be replaced with new shingles, bare studs will be lined with new insulation and covered in new drywall, as we work to restore these desperate houses back into the homes they once were. The work will take years. But we won't give up, knowing our congregation is supporting us.

Want to help? Contact Jim Balthazar, jimbalf@gmail.com or David Graham, sustainxg@gmail.com.



SUMMER FINE ARTS CAMPS

You will find many wonderful opportunities to learn at WUMC this Summer!
We have a great variety of classes. Visit www.westlake-umc.org/fine-arts-acadmey for more info.
Wellness Classes: Qigong, Yoga, Meditation, Private Music Lessons: Voice w/ Shelley Auer Summer Camps: Chinese Language & Arts Camps, Coding with Kids camps, Robotics Camp Want to offer a class or camp? Contact Diana at dsanchez-bushong@westlake-umc.org

WELCOME!

New Members 1st Quarter 2018 Heather and Byron Attridge Judy and Richard Edmonson

Electronic Opt-In

Save paper, get this newsletter in your email in-box! Email Sally at sbrackett@westlake-umc.org

Summer Dates

June 3
June 4
June 10
June 11
June 11-15
June 18
June 18
June 24 - 29
June 25
July 1
July 14 - 21
July 30
August 19



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