

the Westlake UMC Newsletter



A SEASON SET APART

Seeing the Holy in all things this Christmas.

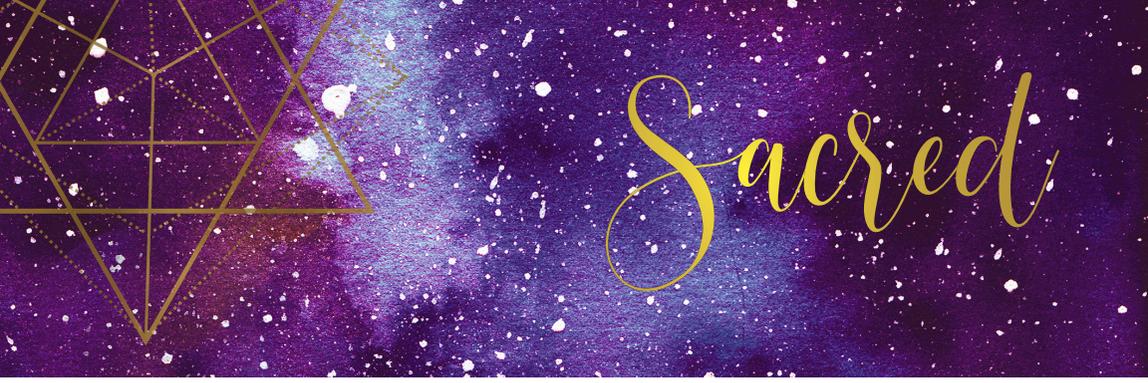
Often, during the Christmas season the juxtaposition of the sacred and secular feel blatantly opposed, or quite blurred. The word "sacred" points to something dedicated as "holy" and "set apart." Whether it's setting apart sacred time to be spent in anticipation of the holy, or opening our hearts to recognize all people as sacred, creating holy space that holds people who grieve or inviting God's wisdom to guide us or a longing for the holy to be birthed into the reality of our lives...

This year, we invite you to a spiritual journey of seeing all things pregnant with the possibility of the holy. What could your Advent and Christmas season experience be like if you lived it looking through the kaleidoscope of the sacred?

Rev. Tracey Beadle
tbeadle@westlake-umc.org

Advent Worship Calendar

December 2	Sacred Time
December 9	Sacred People
December 16	Sacred Joy Services of Lessons & Carols
December 20	Sacred Space An Evening Blue Christmas Service For those grieving a loss.
December 23	Sacred Knowing
December 24	Sacred Being 4:00, 5:30 & 7:30pm
December 30	Sacred Doing Single Service at 10:00am



Sacred Season of Music

Dr. Diana Sanchez-Bushong

What makes music sacred? Is it the place? The language? The style? The tempo? Music is sacred when it helps us connect to our God and to one another. As humans we look to music to help us express something so deep and so mysterious that words alone cannot describe it. We also look to music to unite many people into one voice. So sacred music is connectional but it's also contextual. You might enjoy a sacred moment listening to the Beatles, singing at a nursing home just as much as experiencing music in church.

This Advent as we explore SACRED, we will share in many opportunities to share the sacredness of music at WUMC. Let's join our hearts and minds to our Creator and to one another as we prepare to welcome the holy child into our lives.

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

Dr. Gus Sterneman
gsterneman@westlake-umc.org

Frank Webster
jfrankweb@gmail.com

Children's Choirs Christmas Concert

December 2, 4:00 PM in the Worship Center
A reception immediately follows in Wyatt Hall.

Handbell Christmas Concert

December 9, 6:00 PM in the Worship Center

Lessons and Carols

December 16, 9:00 AM & 11:15 AM in the Worship Center
The joy of the season will be celebrated in our annual Lessons and Carols service. Bible readings are interspersed with congregational songs and anthems. At the 11:15am service we will have a jazz ensemble and all of the carols will be in a jazz idiom. Come join the sacred joy of this day!

Candlelight Christmas Eve Services at 4:00, 5:30 & 7:30

4:00, 5:30 pm -Family Services with Nativity Pageant, kids get to dress up
7:30 pm - Traditional Candlelight Service



The church, marketing, and social media.

I have been working at the church for a couple of months now. I have met so many wonderful people and have witnessed multiple forms of ministry through compassionate service, charitable giving, justice-minded action, and creative expressions of worship. There are so many good things happening in and through the life of this church, and we need to share that with others.

You're here at WUMC because your life has been impacted by God's love through the ministry of your church. If you have been encouraged, cared for, or empowered to do meaningful ministry then you are perfectly suited to help spread the word about your church. We can't keep this all to ourselves; we need to share this with others.

This fall, Pastor Tracey formed a Marketing Team, and there are some sharp and passionate people in this group. They are working to implement a strategy and campaign to communicate the heartbeat of WUMC and effectively spread the word about the church. In our Marketing Team meetings we have been reminded of the most powerful form of marketing – word of mouth communications.

Have you ever asked your friends or family members for recommendations about auto repair shops, plumbers, dental care, or some other kind of service? Sure, we all have. Have

you ever asked on a social media platform like Facebook or Instagram? I'm guessing that many of you have. Why do we do that? We tend to trust those within our social circles more than anyone else.

We can utilize social media to communicate with our social circles via digital word of mouth, which means we can use the most effective form of marketing with those who trust us. This is a great opportunity! If your church is meaningful to you, you can share information about it easily with your circles on social media.

I want to invite you to do a couple of things if you aren't already doing them. First, "like" us on Facebook and "follow" us on Instagram. This way you'll see all of the different events and posts from your church. Second, "share" your church's social media posts so that your friends and followers on Facebook and Instagram will see that information about your church from a trusted source like you. Feel free to "like" and "comment" on WUMC's posts too, because that makes them more visible.

Marketing is really just about spreading the word. Is your church meaningful to you? Has your church impacted your life? Do you know someone who would benefit from being involved in a community of faith like yours? Will you help us spread the word about WUMC? Let's "share" our church together.

Curt Davis
cdavis@westlake-umc.org

Christmas Cards that Care

Mary Lou Batlan

During the Advent season, we want to make extra connections to those who are Unwillingly Absent. Watch in the narthex and at Coffee Time, so you might send Christmas greetings through our Care Notes card ministry, as a different group will be represented weekly in December for mailing to our church family. We also share the beautiful poinsettia flowers from worship in December, by home delivery, after Christmas day. You may volunteer to help our Flower Ministry team to be a part of this season's delivery to our home bound.

Mary Lou Batlan
mlbatlan@gmail.com



WUMC Youth has had a great Fall this year! We worked on splitting our Sunday school programming, which we call "Sunday Connect" because it is where we connect to God and each other! Having separate classes for middle school and high school students meant more wonderful teachers heard their calling to lead students as well as better age specific curriculum.

- Our Middle School students have been traveling through the bible with "The Story" curriculum. Throughout the year they will have journeyed through the entire bible together and will better understand God's great story with God's creation.
- The High School students have studied various different relevant topics including "Science and Faith", "I Am Second: Conversations" and "Galatians". These studies all provide different topics and ways to look at faith, in turn allowing for all different faith levels to go deeper through questions and discussion.

If you haven't tried it out recently, come over to the youth room in building M and check out our Sunday Connect hour on Sunday mornings from 10:10-11:05am. For parents, among other classes offered, there is a Parents of Tweens and Teens class upstairs in 407!

As we close out the 2019 year, we have many other opportunities for youth to come together. Traveling Turkeys event, iACT Service, Advent workshop, Caroling, Bells Concerts and Youth Christmas Party! We hope all find a place this season to connect with community here at WUMC!

Diane Kofahl
youth@westlake-umc.org

Relationships are Key

Emma Bressi

Our Youth Discernment Team started meeting in February and have been working hard since then to narrow our ideas down to three main needs/issues that we want to help in our youth ministry. In one of our latest meetings we discussed our "strategies" which are what we will be doing specifically to help the youth of our church.

One of our three main themes we have discussed that we have found to be a key is **Relationships**. Part of this theme includes helping youth to recognize that they each have 5 adults around them that help the student:

NOTICE the everyday life of the student, including gifts, talents, hard times etc.

NAME their gifts and needs to build them up as well as help in struggles.

NURTURE the students gifts and talents to be successful in their lives.

As a team, our hopes for the upcoming year of 2019 include trying to connect the whole of Westlake UMC with students in ways we haven't before that will help empower their lives!

Written by Emma Bressi - Member of the Youth Discernment Team & Youth Council Junior at Westlake High School



Cookies with Santa

Saturday, December 8 | 9:00-11:00am
All-Star Burger – Westlake (Davenport Village)
3801 N Capital of Texas Hwy ste a-108, Austin, TX 78746

We are a church that cares about having fun. Kids and kids at heart love Cookies with Santa. This special event will indulge your sweet tooth, provide an opportunity for your kids to get their pictures with Santa (by a professional, without the lines), and give your child an opportunity to write a personalized letter to Jolly ol' Saint Nick. We invite you to join the fun on Saturday, December 8 from 9:00-11:00am.

**ALLSTARBURGER**



Children's Ministry

Megan Getman



This year's Advent Workshop will be an intergenerational and interactive event of scripture, conversation, sharing, and art response. It's a terrific way to start the season off right by experiencing the wonder and anticipation of the season with people from all parts of our beautiful church community. We'll gather in the gym on Sunday, December 2nd during the Sunday School hour. All are invited to participate and engage with each other.

We'll have our beloved Christmas Eve services on December 24th. This year's nativity story will be told during the 4:00 PM and 5:30 PM worship services. We are looking forward to experiencing this story with you through story, scripture and song. We even have a new stage set!

January's Children First worship will be on the 7th of January at 9:00 AM. Creative plans are in the works to celebrate Epiphany that day! I hope you will join us as we mark the wise ones' visit to Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

At the beginning of December, registration opens for Wonderfully Made, a new human development education curriculum for 5th and 6th graders. This year's workshop will be run by JJ from Terrytown UMC. It'll happen on the weekend of February 8th and 9th. More dates and details will come soon so watch the bulletin and your email for registration links.

CHRISTMAS STARTS IN OCTOBER

At WUMC we begin to prepare for the miracle of Christmas in October. First, we consider families and individuals impacted by educational and medical challenges, hunger, poverty, natural disasters, loss and loneliness.

Then, we open our hearts to gifts of engagement that we call Christmas In October. It is an invitation to participate in the sharing of God's love for individuals and families near to us and around the world by finding the project(s) that resonate(s) with interests of your own family and friends.

Sign up online at westlake-umc.org/CIO



From top: 1. Women's Story Book Project, 2. It Starts With Soccer, 3. Christmas Party for La Posada, 4. Christmas Caroling, 5. Coffee for the Troops, 6. Hurricane Harvey Recovery, 7. Warm Clothing for Mobile Loaves & Fishes, 8. Cards for Kairos Prison Ministry, 9. Blue Santa, 10. University High School

Fall Fest Success

Pastor Tracey

Fall Festival 2018 was a smashing success! There was food, game, prizes, live music and, of course, the Westlake Fire Truck. And the weather couldn't have been more perfect. With Heather Attridge's inspiring leadership (please thank her personally!) many of you stepped in with critical support; including financial, material goods, and service related. Countless people set up and cleaned up, served food, helped guests register for door prizes and purchase meal tickets, and played music. The youth did an incredible job leading the children in games, painting faces and applying temporary tattoos. The balloon art was a favorite! I was slain more than once by a balloon sword!

And all of you did an amazing job of inviting your friends and neighbors by personal invitation and by leveraging your social media. (Special thanks to Jonathan for designing our postcard and Facebook invites!) As a result, we doubled previous years' attendance with more than 230 people. (It was hard to get a definite count. Nobody would stand still long enough!)

So...thank you THANK YOU...especially Heather...and all of you who were so generous with your resources and worked so hard and cheerfully. We got to meet many new people in the community and it was SO much fun! I'm already excited about Fall Fest 2019!



“Therefore, I say to you, don’t worry about your life, what you’ll eat or what you’ll drink, or about your body, what you’ll wear. Isn’t life more than food and the body more than clothes?” ~Matthew 6:25

During our Stewardship Series this year we’ve explored the false dichotomy that we somehow have to choose between money and possessions, and life. Jesus did not pit life and wealth against each other, but he does suggest that we

sometimes confuse life with, or define life by, our possessions and material security. He recommends that we loosen our grip on financial and material security that we might embrace a life he promises is so much more than all these things. As we’ve explored what it means to rightly order money and life, we’ve gained skills and tools to help us better leverage our finances to serve God’s purpose for our lives, that we might experience this life that’s best lived in faith and resides in Christ.

As we enter into the season of Advent and anticipate the birth of the One through whom God both shares and redeems this flesh and blood life of ours, I pray that each of us would, in deep gratitude, be inspired to share the gift of this life that is more with a generosity of heart and spirit that truly reflects the image in which we are created.

I’m so very grateful that I get to share life with all of you!

Rev. Tracey Beadle
tbeadle@westlake-umc.org

PERMANENT ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE Erin Cowden

THANK YOU to church members Joseph and Cheng Hang for their generous gift of \$50,000.00 to start “The Joseph Hang & Family Scholarship Fund.”

This donation is made in celebration of their 50th Wedding Anniversary and God’s bountiful blessings on their family. From this endowment, scholarships will be awarded annually to deserving students within our congregation beginning in the year 2020.

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

The Church will be hosting Dave Ramsey’s popular 9-week seminar about money management beginning on January 8, 2019. The cost is \$69.00

for the starting materials. Registration is required. <https://www.financialpeace.com/classes/1076540/> registration.

AWARD REQUESTS

All requests for financial support from the Permanent Endowment Fund are prayerfully considered at the end of each calendar year. Awards vary from year to year. To request support for a program or project, go to <https://westlake-umc.org/endowment> and click Proposal Form, or speak with any committee member. The committee members are: Erin Cowden, Mark Frazier, Penny Schmidt, Richard Hargraves, Lee Deviney, and David Graham.

SMARTER RETIREMENT GIVING Kyle Bennett

Due to recent changes in tax laws, particularly the increased standard deduction, many people may no longer be able to itemize deductions, including charitable contributions. Fortunately for people age 70 ½ or older, the tax law allows a contribution to be transferred directly from an individual retirement account (IRA) to a charity. This is referred to as a qualified charitable distribution (QCD). The money given to charity counts toward the donor’s required minimum distribution, but doesn’t

increase the donor’s adjusted gross income so the donor does not have to pay income tax on the distribution. Lower adjusted gross income could also help the donor qualify for other tax breaks. For example, it might increase the deduction for medical expenses, reduce the tax on Social Security benefits, or help avoid a higher-income surcharge for Medicare premiums.

You can also continue to get a tax break for donating shares of appreciated securities and real

estate to charity. If you’ve held the property longer than a year, you can avoid capital gain tax on the profit if you donate it directly to charity without liquidating it.

If you have questions about any of this please consult your tax advisor or call the business office and talk to Tim Cook.

As always, the church is grateful for your generosity and your giving makes possible powerful ministry that changes lives!

Financial Update Corey Blahuta

For the first nine months of 2018 income is running about 6% below the same time period in 2017 and around 5% below our 2018 year to date budget. Expenses for the first nine months are slightly below our 2018 year to date budget and slightly higher than expenses for the first nine months of 2017.

We are now well out of the months for our annual summer giving slow down but we have been slower than normal in terms of contributions in September and October so please take a moment to review where you stand on your 2018 pledge and make a contribution next Sunday! Remember there are

online options for giving that can be accessed through the church’s website.

YTD (Jan.-Sept.)	
Income	\$785,638
Expenses	\$856,993
Net income	(\$71,295)

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

Welcome New WUMC Members!

August Members

James Beadle
Michaela Beadle, Zaye Beadle
James Joseph McDonnell, IV
Ashley Kay McDonnell

August Baptisms

Ryker Bear Roos
James Joseph McDonnell, V

September Members:

Olivia Nix
Maria Green, Ryan Green

September Baptisms

Azalea Adele Garcia

October Members

Curt Davis, Dawn Davis

CHRISTMAS CALENDAR

December 2
December 2
December 2
December 8
December 9
December 15
December 16
December 16
December 24
December 30

First Sunday of Advent
Advent Workshop 10:10-11:05am
Children's Choirs Christmas Concert, 4pm
Pictures with Santa & Cookie Decorating, 9:00 - 11:00am
Handbell Christmas Concert, 6pm
Christmas Caroling
Lessons and Carols Worship Services, 9 & 11:15am
Youth Christmas Party 3:30-5:30pm
Christmas Eve Services at 4, 5:30 & 7:30 pm
1 Morning Worship Service at 10:00 am



westlake
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

512.327.1335
www.westlake-umc.org