

October 2017  
Faith UCC  
970 N. Loop 337  
New Braunfels, TX 78130

Glimpses of Faith Newsletter  
Church Phone 625-6761  
[www.faithuccnb.org](http://www.faithuccnb.org)  
Rev. Scott B. Martin, Pastor  
Cell Phone 830-515-2866  
Rev. Ray Bizer, Pastor Emeritus  
Pastoral Assistant, Janet

Sherman

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## Pastor's Page

Like millions of TV viewers I've been watching Ken Burns new documentary on the Vietnam War. In some ways it's been a trip down memory lane. The American military involvement was winding down

about the time I was finishing high school. I graduated in 1972 and was lucky enough to have a pretty high draft number. The U.S. had all its troops out of Viet Nam by 1973 and the draft ended. South Vietnam would fall to North in 1975. In the end over 58,000 U.S. troops would die and it is estimated some two million Vietnamese died! Hundreds of thousands more were wounded and millions of lives affected. Today Vietnam and U.S. veterans still have to deal with medical problems caused by agent orange and other lingering effects.

I came away from watching this series with a number of lessons:

- We had no business being there. The war started as attempt to kick out the French colonial masters after WWII and then evolved into a ideological battle between the West and Communism. If you are going to go to war you better have a VERY good reason.
- It has been said that "Truth is the first casualty of war." This was certainly true of the Vietnam War. Both Republican and Democratic administrations lied about what was going on there to try and maintain support for the war.
- In connection with the previous lesson is the incredible value of a FREE press. The press helped puncture the deceptions with their journalism and with the power of photography. Who can forget the picture of the Vietnamese official shooting a Viet Cong man in the head, or the young girl who was burned and naked from napalm, running towards the camera man.
- The value of public demonstrations against the war, those who refused to be silenced by those who shouted "America love it or leave it!" Yes, some demonstrators, like the Weathermen, went way too far, but others like the Veterans Against the War, definitely spoke truth to power. Public demonstrations as civic engagement is patriotic and a way of embodying American values.
- Most Vietnam veterans served honorably, were caught up in the war machine and something far bigger then themselves. They did not receive the proper care and support when they got out.
- The Vietnam War ended 42 years ago and we are still trying to figure out what happened and what we can learn from it going forward. It was amazing to see American and Viet Cong vets decades later welcoming each other with open arms and in some cases creating programs to help Vietnam today.

## Hurricane Response



Buckets assembled Faith UCC in New Braunfels

We have all seen the devastating effects of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma these last few weeks. Individuals and groups have stepped up BIG time to help, everyone from well known football players like JJ Watt, who has now raised over 30 Million dollars, to business owners like Mattress Mack, to kids setting up lemonade stands to raise money. It will take countless individuals, organizations, foundations, and government at all levels to help rebuild. Churches will play an important role as well. Churches will not be able to do all of the rebuilding but we will be important partners in the process.



Buckets go to Austin

Helping in crisis' like this is right up the Church's alley. It is part of our DNA. The Church has some advantages in this process. Not only is helping part of our DNA but the Church is a worldwide network. This network can be mobilized and utilized to get help where it is needed. Usually overhead is low and volunteers plentiful.

Our recent experience with the Church World Service Clean Up Buckets is a good case in point. Let's follow the process:

1. Here at Faith UCC we gathered donations of money and items for the buckets within days of hurricane.
2. Volunteers at Faith UCC assembled the buckets and took them to a Methodist church which Church World Service, an ecumenical agency made up many different church denominations, had arranged to use as a depot for gathering the buckets. CWS provides the instructions to assemble the buckets, storage and distribution.
3. The buckets will be distributed to those in need in Texas often using local churches in the communities affected. (St. Paul UCC is a case in point. They have distributed more than 400 buckets assembled by churches all across the country to people in need in the Rockport area.)



St. Paul UCC distributes in the Rockport area

The buckets address short term emergency needs but the UCC works primarily in long term recovery. Long after the hurricanes fade from the headlines and the world has moved on to new disasters the UCC and other churches will still there helping people in storm ravaged areas.

## Heart of Texas Association News

Our fall Association Meeting is coming up very soon **at Church of the Savior in Cedar Park on Saturday, November 4th, 10 am through lunch.** One major item on the agenda will be the Ecclesiastical Council for Andrew Young, Member in Discernment with Trinity Church of Austin. We will be sending Andrew's ordination paper out to all of our Association churches, along with a more detailed invitation to the fall meeting, in the next few weeks. All Association church members are invited. As many of you know, ministers are ordained by the Association in the United Church of Christ for ministry throughout our denomination. Our Association Committee on Ministry and the candidate's home church work with Members in Discernment throughout the ordination process. The Ecclesiastical Council is the time and place for the final step, and therefore is crucial to ministry for the whole United Church of Christ. I hope many of you will join us for the important work of examining Andrew for approval for ordination, for joining together in worship and fellowship, and for doing the business together of our Association.

Churches throughout our Association have responded with full generosity and concern to the Hurricane Harvey disaster. I am so very thankful for all that you have done -- the gifts and work that I already know about and that I don't yet know about. Already, a group from Friedens Geronimo went down to Rockport hauling two bobcats to help with the clean up, individuals from Trinity Church of Austin have gone to help, at least two churches have given a number of clean up buckets to Church World Service, many have donated hygiene kits and other requested items locally, Weimar UCC has been involved helping with those who were flooded in La Grange, and many of you have given money. And these are just examples that I know of so far.

As many of the Association pastors know, I attended a meeting in Houston recently for UCC clergy and other interested persons with our UCC Disaster Ministry staff person, our Conference volunteer Disaster Coordinator, and Don Longbottom. Dan DeLeon and Ryan Hart were also there from our Association. We heard stories about the flooding in Houston from local people there, heard about how our Houston churches have opened their doors to help with the distribution of needed supplies, and learned how the UCC is responding. Denominations and other groups generally specialize in different aspects of disaster work. The UCC's commitment and expertise is generally in long term disaster recovery, meaning that our denomination will be providing seed money to help form long term local disaster recovery committees in the community and providing volunteer opportunities in the rebuilding process (not limited to our church members but to the entire community) over a number of years. The money we donate will mainly come in now but be spent over a long period of time, as happened after Hurricane Katrina. Our volunteer teams will start work in a few months, after the initial clean up has been done. I encourage our churches to start identifying who would be willing to go to Houston and South Texas for this work. It is already possible to sign up for a volunteer list on the UCC Disaster Recovery website for future contact to set up these teams ([http://www.ucc.org/disaster\\_hurricane\\_harvey](http://www.ucc.org/disaster_hurricane_harvey)). In the short term, the South Central Conference is collecting money to help Christ UCC Cypress meet their insurance deductible, as the church was flooded for the second time in the Harvey rains. The Conference will also give other help to our churches to the extent we have the money to do so.

I look forward to working together in our churches and as an Association in the coming months to give toward our brothers and sisters in need.  
Blessings in Christ, Liz Nash, Association Minister

## A Hand UP not A Hand Out by Hulen Brown

Wil and I arrived at **Back Bay Mission in Biloxi**, Mississippi on August 1<sup>st</sup> to begin our two months of service. **This marks our 5<sup>th</sup> year with United Church of Christ Partners In Service as long-term volunteers.** We live very comfortably at Eden Hill Retirement Community in New Braunfels, Texas. So, we don't have to worry about leaving our home for two months at a time. After a few days, I sensed that the atmosphere around the mission felt different. Change was in the air. People I had become familiar with had moved on. New people had been hired on the staff. Jill was retiring after nine years with the Food Pantry. There was a sense of celebration mixed with sadness in the air. Two of our Micah Day Center guests had died tragically. One of the most familiar guest had moved on, but now has terminal cancer. Another guest excitedly showed me her new ID badge. She is now housed and working in a government job. Sustainable changes. There are many more local volunteers than in years past.

This time I got to see homelessness up close and personal. Before, I think I only saw the "sanitized version" of homelessness from a distance. But when the offices were closed and the work camps weren't here I got to watch the homeless people around the campus of Back Bay Mission coming and going, waiting, and being human. I was re-awakened as I got a close look at the reality of what homeless people must do to survive day to day. It wasn't pretty.



On Thursday, August 24<sup>th</sup> around 11:30 a.m. I was standing on the porch of the Mission House watching for Deborah, the Day Center Coordinator. We were assigned to staff the Back Bay Mission booth that afternoon at the Success Women's Conference. The all-day event was taking place at the IP Casino. I was eager for an opportunity to work closely with Deborah for the first time.

I saw a neatly dressed woman approaching the administration office which was closed for the day. I went down to meet her and introduce myself. She wanted information about the types of services that Back Bay Mission provided. I gave her a brief overview and asked what kinds of services she was interested in. She said that she was currently sleeping in her car. She was homeless because of a relationship that had turned violent. She had started to work at a new job assisting in a law office. The person she was living with came to where she was working and created a scene. The police were called to have the person removed. Her new employer let her go immediately.

She was not bitter nor angry because she realized there were some mental issues involved. She said that each morning she wakes up in her car and thanks God for blessing her and protecting her. She said she was grateful because it could've been much worse. I also found out that she has a degree in Communications and an entrepreneurial spirit. This was the first time she had ever been homeless. Then she showed me these cute little clear plastic containers of fresh fruit with a little fork taped to the side. She was selling them for \$5.00 to the construction workers. This is how she earned money to put gas in her car. She had been using her membership at Planet Fitness to take showers. At night she would park at the end of a pier on the beach where she prayed, made plans and prepared her fruit bowls to sell the next day. She



## **A Hand UP not A Hand Out by Hulen Brown (continued from previous page)**

said she knew God had a plan and a reason for allowing her to go through this and she was determined to stay positive. I was amazed and moved by her attitude as she was telling me about the challenges she was dealing with. (continued next page)

I told her that she could come to the Micah Day Center tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock. She could take a shower, receive clean clothing and hygiene items and speak with Ann McWilliams, the Case Manager. She said she would be there. I told her we needed folks like her in the Back Bay Mission network because she is a survivor. I invited her into the Mission House and explained what I do as the Volunteer Coordinator. She asked me for some ice for her bag that she kept her fruit in. She never asked for a place to sleep. I told her we're not a shelter. I explained that the Mission House has 44 beds for volunteers who come from throughout the United States and pay to spend the week serving here in Biloxi. She seemed impressed with the work of Back Bay Mission. She said she would come back tomorrow/Friday.

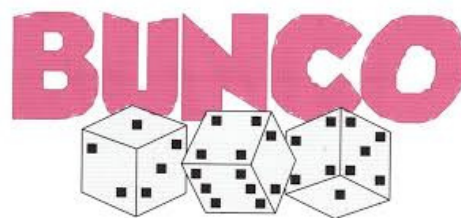
I visited many of the booths at the SUCCESS Women's Conference. It was a powerful experience to be in the presence of so many professional women that are pulling together by providing services in the Gulf Coast. I told Jill about my meeting with the woman at the mission, that she had a College degree in Communications and that she was sleeping in her car. Jill got excited. She had just heard that one of the non-profit agencies, Rebekah's House, was looking to hire someone. Jill said this woman may be suited for the position because of her degree in Communications. I said we needed to wait to see if she would show up at the Micah Day Center and go through the intake process with Deborah and Ann. She did show up. She went through the intake process. Ann gave her Jill's contact phone number, she called from Ann's office. She set up an appointment for Monday for the interview. I prayed that the weather would stay nice that weekend and it did. She went through their interview process and they hired her the same day. She did not spend one more night in her car. They hired her and gave her the keys to a beautiful house to manage as a Shelter for Homeless Women with Children!

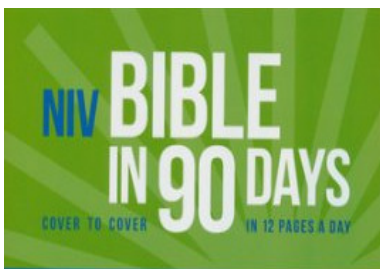
Our Back Bay Mission team STOOD TALL together and gave this woman the hand up that she needed. God truly did have a good plan and I feel honored to have had the privilege to play a part in it.

## **October Adult Fellowship Opportunity--Join us for a night of fellowship and Bunco on Friday, Oct 13, at 6:30 p.m. at the church!**

Bunco is a fun, exciting game and easy to learn. No experience is required. We'll have a potluck soup and salad supper. Please bring your favorite soup, salad, bread, or dessert to share. Drinks will be provided. Each player should bring \$5 for cash prizes for the winners--most games won, most games lost, most buncos, most snake eyes, and last bunco.

Please sign up in the narthex. For more information contact Dan or Vicky Geisler at 817-925-3222.





## Bible in 90 Days is Off and Running

The Bible in 90 Days for lay people kicked off with 12 participants and is off and running on Wednesdays from 7-8 p.m. through December 20<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to pop in and “audit” a session to see what it is all about, feel free to join us one Wednesday as able. The first half hour is a video lecture by an Old Testament scholar, and a New Testament scholar once we get that far. The second half hour includes a lively discussion about the video and the readings from the previous week. You are welcome to sit in and “audit” (as I once did Helen’s Ecclesiastes class during her seminary days).

## Art as Spiritual Listening Moves to First Thursday

The mixed media art group meets on the first Thursday of the month from 6:30-8 p.m. No art experience necessary. Each month we experiment with a new art process/media for a relaxing time of listening to God while chatting with each other. The art sessions are held in the home/art studio of Helen Boursier. All welcome. For information, contact Helen at [helenb@boursier.us](mailto:helenb@boursier.us)

## Legos for Children Who Were Victims of Hurricane Harvey

Thank you to everyone who has helped by donating LEGO and DUPLO so far. We will be heading to the Houston area very soon but we still need more so that we can help as many kids as we can (Houston, Port A, Rockport, Puerto Rico, etc). Check out [www.bricgive.com](http://www.bricgive.com) or get in touch with [Lana](#) or I if you want to help. Thank you all again!  
Sam and Lana Ward



## Coloring Books-Crayons-and Stickers

Coloring books, small packets of crayons, and fun stickers are needed as an easy way to support the refugee ministry of presence at the bus station in downtown San Antonio where Helen Boursier goes once or twice a month to share TLC with the families once they have been released from family detention and given permission to continue on to their families awaiting them in the U.S. Depending upon how many families are released on any given day, she distributes 5-30 coloring books with a small package of crayons to the children. The stickers are an extra treat that the children (of course) love. Once the children are settled in with the coloring books, she helps the mothers and older children to make a beaded bracelet while they wait for their bus. [If anyone is interested in riding along and helping, she generally leaves New Braunfels around 10:30 a.m. to arrive at the bus station around 11:30 and depart by 3:30 or 4.](#) There is no set day she goes—flexible to her teaching schedule. Contact Helen at [helenb@boursier.us](mailto:helenb@boursier.us) or 830-730-3202.

## Worship Assistants

**10-1** Liturgist: Hulen Brown Acolyte: Cade Perry Council Rep: Dan Geisler  
Greeter: Nicolle Clark Hospitality: Vicky Geisler Nursery: TBD  
Ushers: Dan & Vicky Geisler; Nicolle Clark; Devyn Perry Communion: Michelle Perry  
AV: David Reed Church School: Jim & Chrissy Gossett

**10-8** Liturgist: Kathy Leber Acolyte: Joe Ward Council Rep: Mikki Ward  
Greeter: Richard Leber Hospitality: Karen Dietz Nursery: TBD  
Ushers: Joe & Mikki Ward; Richard & Kathy Leber  
AV: Joe Ward Church School: Kim Beauchamp & Joe Ward

**10-15** Liturgist: Cade Perry Acolyte: Kai Perry Council Rep: Wil Brown  
Greeter: Elly Beauchamp Hospitality: Julia Allison Nursery: Larissa Hunley  
Ushers: Elly & Sofia Beauchamp; Camdyn Martinez; Grace Perry AV: Quinn Perry  
Church School: Jan Ziegler & TBD

**10-22** Liturgist: Ralph Ludwig Acolyte: Elly Beauchamp Council Rep: Kim Beauchamp  
Greeter: Sofia Beauchamp Hospitality: Ed & Carol Martinez Nursery: TBD  
Ushers: Kim & Jakob Beauchamp; Eddie & Carol Martinez AV: Tim Marlow  
Church School: TBD

**10-29** Liturgist: Ralph Ludwig Acolyte: Jospheh Guerrero Council Rep: Joseph Guerrero  
Greeter: Joe Ward Hospitality: Nicolle Clark Nursery: Larissa Hunley  
Ushers: Joseph Guerrero; Nicolle Clark; Michelle Perry; Ralph Ludwig AV: Mikki Ward  
Church School: Joe Ward & Eddie & Carol Martinez

**11-5** Liturgist: Julia Allison Acolyte: Mikki Ward Council Rep: Mikki Ward  
Communion: Sheila Angerer Greeter: Dari DeStefano Hospitality: Chrissy Gossett  
Ushers: Joe & Mikki Ward; Julia Allison; Jim Gossett Nursery: TBD  
Church School: Jan Ziegler & Kim Beauchamp

If you cannot serve on the date(s) shown, please try to find a sub. If that is not possible, leave a message at the church (830-625-6761) as soon as possible. If you would like to be added or removed from all or part of the Worship Assistant List, please contact the church office.

## October Birthdays

10-1 Judy Anderson 10-3 Cullen Leonhardt 10-11 Tex Pantermuehl  
10-13 Eddie Martinez 10-18 Evelyn Krueger 10-20 Louis Heras  
10-21 Cassidy Martinez 10-22 Scott Martin 10-23 Carol Sisco-Martinez  
10-26 Gage Marlow 10-29 Nathan Leber

If your birthday isn't here let the pastor know so we can get it in next year!

Islam and the Islamic world are prominent in our news and in our minds, yet polls say that nearly 60% of Americans say they know little or nothing about Islam. A similar number do not know any Muslims.



## Getting to Know Islam: Beyond the Headlines

**Dr. Whitney Bodman**

*Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary*

*Dr. Bodman is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and a professor of comparative religion at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.*

This series is intended to introduce participants to the Islamic tradition, the fundamentals and diversity of its beliefs, and practices across time and place.

Series runs Sundays:

**October 22, 29 & November 5, 12**

**4:00-6:00 PM**

at

**Gruene United Methodist Church**

*2629 E. Common Street*

*New Braunfels, TX 78130*

***Free and open to anyone seeking understanding***

An ecumenical offering from:

Gruene United Methodist Church, Peace Lutheran Church, Faith United Church of Christ, St. John's Episcopal Church, and the Unitarian Universalists of New Braunfels.