

December 2019
Faith UCC
970 N. Loop 337
New Braunfels, TX 78130

Glimpses of Faith Newsletter
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This is the time of year when parties and hospitality are the order of the day. While on sabbatical and since coming back I've found myself thinking about hospitality and how important it is, especially for strangers but also even for friends, family and neighbors. I looked it up in a dictionary to find the Latin root for the word. It is *hospitare* which means to entertain. Hospital has a similar Latin derivation. Did you know that back in the Middle Ages a hospital wasn't just for the sick a hospital could refer to a place for anyone in need of shelter, not just the sick or aged, but also pilgrims and travelers.

Throughout my month in Scotland I was the recipient of great hospitality. The very first day a complete stranger that I met on the train told me her husband could give me a ride to my B & B in Melrose, so I wouldn't have to take a bus. Mr. Bell at Dunferline House where I was staying gave me a free walking staff when he found out I was walking the St. Cuthbert Pilgrimage Trail. Apparently he cuts them from local trees and gives them to any guest walking the trail. I used it throughout my stay in Scotland.

When I was exhausted from walking the first day Stacy at the Barn B & B in Ancrum gave a ride from the visitor center to the B & B. I accidentally left my hat somewhere on the trail that first day and the woman at the coffee shop I stopped at in Moorebattle didn't have hats to sell but she gave me one that was in lost in found. Later the man at the youth hostel in Kirk Yetholm gave me a better hat with a brim all the way around. It too had been left in lost and found. On Lindisfarne I discovered I had not made and confirmed a reservation at the Crown and Anchor. He graciously stopped what he was doing and called several places to find me a room on the island. Given the fact that the tide had come in at that point had he not found me a room I would have been sleeping outside. I ended up staying at the Lindisfarne Inn and when I asked about doing laundry Geordie, the owner, graciously offered to have the hotel staff do it free of charge! This was all in just the first week I was in Scotland!

Later when I was in the Orkney Islands, I stopped by the Genealogy Society to see if they could find anything on my ancestor from there. It was staffed by volunteers who graciously set to work searching computer files. They found the actual farm he came from, Holland Farm on South Rousey Island. I didn't have a car and the buses did not go anywhere near the farm. One of the volunteers graciously offered to take me out there the next morning. I met him at 9 the next day and he took me out there. It took awhile to find the farm. We stopped one place to ask and an elderly couple pointed it out. The husband even remembered knew some of the Budes but said they were all gone now. It was a thrill to see the farm where George Budge (Burgess) had come from ! We also stopped by a church and the cemetery was full of Budes. I wouldn't have experienced any of this without hospitality!

Mary, Jospey and the baby found gracious hospitality when the innkeeper found them room in the stable when there was no room in the in. Give thanks for hospitality and extend it to others during this holiday season and throughout the New Year.

Faith UCC and Friedens UCC Host Family Promise Guests December 22-January 5

Once again our church members have the opportunity to welcome families in the Family Promise program over the Christmas holidays. Bizer Retreat Center at Slumber Falls Camp will be the location for our volunteer adventures. Be sure to check your email account for the volunteer sign up slots such as overnight hosting, set up and take down, providing breakfast and lunch items, and more.

Our most critical need is for overnight volunteers from Faith Church since Friedens is supplying the evening meals. These volunteers provide a sense of security and availability should a guest have a need during the evening hours. Overnight volunteer/s or family volunteers arrive at 7 pm or a bit earlier to visit with the families and spend the night in a designated volunteer cabin. Early the next morning guests leave for the Day Center after picking up a "Grab and Go" breakfast bag containing fruit, juice, and a breakfast/cereal bar. With a couple exceptions on the weekend, the guests leave by 6:30 a.m. Overnight volunteers are then ready to close up the Bizer Retreat Center and leave for the day.



This year we will not be needing HEB gift cards to better comply with the program's goals for its guests as they work toward financial accountability and independence. However, we will welcome family friendly videos, coloring books, games, and simple crafts. You will see a need for breakfast casseroles that the families can take out of the fridge and warm in the oven on the mornings that they leave later for the day center or the holiday days when the Center is closed.

We will know close to the hosting date just how many families we are welcoming and the ages of the children in those families. There will be an opportunity after church on Sunday, December 8, for volunteers to gather with Michelle and Karen for more information on specific details and needs. It is also a time for persons thinking about volunteering to learn more about ways they might help. It is the experience of volunteers that they serve not only as a blessing to the guests but are also blessed in return.



December Birthdays

12-1	Cody Allen	12-2	Mike Ziegler
12-11	Devyn Perry-Clark		
12-15	Mikki Ward	12-22	Janet Sherman
12-23	Richard Leber	12-24	Ainsley Nipper
12-25	Bob Manning		

If your birthday is no on here
let Pastor Scott know.

Advent & Christmas Calendar Events

Hanging of the Greens Sunday December 1

Join us in the worship for Hanging of the Greens. We will be putting the chrsmos on the tree, hanging the wreathes and garland, and explore the meaning of these and other Christmas traditions. Since it is the first Sunday of the month we will also have communion.



Salvation Army Bell Ringing Sunday December 8th 1-6 p.m.

We will be ringing after church at J.C. Penny's at Creekside from 1-6 p.m. There is a signup sheet on the kiosk. There are six one hour slots to be filled.



Holiday Potluck After Church on Sunday, December 15th

Bring your favorite holiday dish to share. Pastor Scott will present a program on Oban, Mull Island and his stay at the Monastery for All Celtic Saints.

Family Sing Along & Fellowship on Wednesday, Dec. 18th 6-8 p.m.

Join us for a fun night of cookie decorating, snacks and a sing along. Some of the cookies will be taken out for our Family Promise Families to enjoy. Stephanie Phillips and Jeremy Albers will provide music. The music and sing along part of the program will begin at 7 p.m.

Sunday School Christmas Program on Sunday, December 22nd

It's that time of year again! Join the Youth for their Christmas Program on December 22nd as they take us on a journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem. Our youth always work hard to bring the story of Jesus' birth to life and this year is no exception. Please save the date and make an effort to attend to witness the story of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as we celebrate His birth and our Faith community.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 5:30 p.m.

There is no better way to prepare for and celebrate the birth of the Christ child than to participate in a Christmas Eve Candlelit Service. The Light Shines in the Darkness and the Darkness has not overcome it. We add our own small light to the Christ light that shone forth more than 2,000 years ago.

Heart of Texas Association News

At our Heart of Texas Association Meeting on Saturday, November 16th, we held two Ecclesiastical Councils, voting to approve the ordination of Cam Burton and to grant Privilege of Call to Rev. Billie Watts. I wrote about Cam and his chaplaincy at St. David's South Medical Center, Austin last month. Billie was recommended for Privilege of Call at our Heart of Texas Committee on Ministry meeting on November 5th, so her good news is more recent.



Billie and Kerry Kirtley, who is in our Member in Discernment Process, are the founding pastors of Touchstone Community Church in Boerne, a UCC new church start that now has gone through the process with our denomination to become a UCC Church in Formation. Billie comes to us as an ordained United Methodist minister (an ordained United Methodist Elder), who took a leave of absence from active ministry to allow herself time to make the decision to change denominations. It is wonderful to welcome these very fine and gifted ministers as colleagues in ministry in the UCC.

After our meeting in a service that began at 3 pm, Cam was ordained at Trinity Church of Austin. Several who attended the meeting were able to stay for the service, and many of his friends in ministry came to be part of it. It was a great joy to affirm his call and to be part of supporting his years of work as a hospital chaplain.

Privilege of Call, which we granted to Billie at the end of her Ecclesiastical Council, allows a minister from another denomination to move into full standing in the United Church of Christ when that minister has a call to a UCC church. It is a full move into the UCC, with the minister giving up the other denomination as a place of ministerial standing. Billie's call is to ministry at Touchstone Community Church, which means she now has full standing in ministry in the UCC.

We also had another great joy to share at our meeting: that Touchstone Community Church has just received a \$40000 New and Renewing Spiritual Communities grant from the national UCC, using funds from the Strengthen the Church offering that many of our churches support. This is an enormous "leg up" to Touchstone, and involves finding matching funds for part of the award. Both Touchstone and Open Cathedral have now been recipients of substantial grant money from the UCC. The enthusiasm and hard work of these new communities among us is an inspiration as they seek to give an extravagant welcome to all who come to be among them.

We made two other significant decisions at our Fall Meeting. First, **we voted to give \$8750 from our Association funds in travel scholarships to the UCC National Youth Event next summer**, using money that we set aside each year for youth events. **This money will be divided up and distributed equally to all who register by the NYE deadline. If our numbers are similar to those in the past (approximately 70 from this Association), we expect to give travel funds of about \$125 per person.** Second, we voted to continue our support and practice of Licensed Ministry as the other South Central Conference Associations have done. The new Manual on Ministry for the United Church of Christ moves away from supporting Licensed Ministry, but we have a strong and faithful group of Licensed Ministers who have served our churches well and have offered great vitality to our Association. We appreciate them and want to continue to support their work.

Blessings in Christ, Liz Nash, Association Minister

Worship Assistant List for December

December 1

Liturgist: Janet Sherman Acolyte & Council Rep: Carol Sisco-Martinez
Greeter: Karen Kramm Hospitality: Julia Allison Communion: Janet Sherman
AV: Cassidy Sisco-Martinez Church School: (no classes) Nursery: TBA
Ushers: Carol Sisco-Martinez; Beth Bizer; Kim Beauchamp

12/8 Liturgist: Curt Leonhardt Acolyte & Council Rep: Jason Chapel
Greeter: Michelle Perry Hospitality: Nicolle Clark Nursery: TBA
Church School: Karen Dietz & Quinn & Kai Perry AV: Joe Ward
Ushers: Jason Chapel; David Reed; Louie Heras; Curt Leonhardt

12/15 Liturgist: Julia Allison Acolyte & Council Rep: Sam Ward Greeter: Joe Ward
Hospitality: (Potluck) Nursery: TBA Church School: Joe Ward & Kim & Elly Beauchamp
AV: Kyle Kramm Ushers: Sam Ward; Richard & Kathy Leber; Julia Allison;

12/22 Liturgist: Jason Chapel Acolyte & Council Rep: Valerie Oates
Greeter: Sheila Angerer Hospitality: Chrissy Gossett Nursery: TBA
Church School: Christmas Program AV: Tim Marlow
Ushers: Valerie Oates; Jason Chapel; Jim & Will Gossett

12/24 Liturgist: Nicolle Clark Acolyte & Council Rep: Bob Manning Greeter: Joe Ward
Nursery: TBA AV: Joe Ward
Ushers: Bob Manning; Nicolle Clark; Kai Perry; Grace Perry

12/29 Liturgist: Karen Dietz Acolyte & Council Rep: Mike Ziegler Greeter: Beth Bizer
Hospitality: Kathy Leber Nursery: TBA Church School: Break AV: David Reed
Ushers: Mike & Jan Ziegler; Frank & Karen Dietz

1/ 5 Liturgist: Jennifer Marlow Acolyte & Council Rep: Carol Sisco-Martinez
Greeter: Eddie Martinez Hospitality: Tex Pantermuehl Nursery: TBA
Church School: Break AV: Joe Ward
Ushers: Carol Sisco-Martinez; Tim & Jennifer Marlow; Tex Pantermuehl

If you cannot serve on the date(s) shown, please try to find a sub. If that is not possible, please 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.



December Calendar

- 12/1 Hanging of the Greens Service
- 12/3 Church Council Meeting 7 p.m.
- 12/8 Second Sunday of Advent & Salvation Army Bell Ringing 1-6 p.m.
- 12/15 Third Sunday of Advent & Potluck Program on Oban, Mull Island & Monastery of All Celtic Saints
- 12/18 Advent Fellowship & Sing-a-long 6-8 p.m.
- 12/20 SOS Food Bank 1-4 p.m.
- 12/22 Fourth Sunday of Advent & Children's Christmas Program
- 12/24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 5:30 p.m.
- 12/25 Merry Christmas!
- 12/29 First Sunday After Christmas



1/2/2020 January newsletter articles due (goes out January 4, 2020)

The UCC National Youth Event July 22-25!!!

The National Youth Event is a stellar experience! Join thousands of youth from around the U.S. for four days of high energy inspiration! It will be held at Purdue University in Indiana.. Cost is \$375 but the church will pay up to half! The Association is also offering around \$125 towards transportation costs! Here is the link for further info <http://www.uccpages.org/nye2020/> Often bringing in 4,000 participants, this time together is centered on faith, leadership, service and social justice to empower our youth and young adults (ages 12-22). It is not too early to start thinking about going!

