

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World

The Evangel



ST. STEPHEN'S
united methodist church



We are all, without exception, beloved children of God

A Message From the Senior Pastor

On Monday, I got to do something I hadn't done since 2019. Along with Pat Anderson and Mary Peek, I made chicken nuggets, corn on the cob, and pineapple slices. Kid food. We were cooking for our first in-person messy church since the pandemic started. The picture on the cover of this newsletter is kids making crafts, singing songs, eating food, and learning about how Christians should behave with compassion. Because following Jesus means being compassionate even when nobody else thinks we should be. Kids teach us so much — and really love chicken nuggets.

October 10, we start a new worship series that will carry us all the way until Advent. The series is called Upside Down, and will be working through the lectionary's gospel passages, most of which come from the Gospel of Mark. The series wraps up on Christ the King/Reign of Christ Sunday, when we really remember just how incredibly upside-down it is to call someone like Jesus our King.

Part of Jesus's upside-down way of looking at the world is to put the lost, vulnerable, and hurting in our midst in places of honor and power instead of having them hide in the shadows. This month's mission focus is the Houston Area Women's Center, a place we've supported for many years. About 25% of women experience domestic violence at some point in their lifetime. This statistic is so heartbreaking we often shy away from talking about it. Like most hard things, the pandemic has compounded this problem with isolation, economic stress, and countless other issues. Anything you give to communion this month will help to support this crucial place's work helping women get out of impossible situations and feel safe.

Paz,
Nathan

Youth and Family News

UMYF

Our Sunday evening youth group (also known as UMYF) will meet twice in October firstly on the 10th and then again on the 24th. This will actually be the new format for our youth gathering replacing the previous schedule of meetings on first and third Sundays. Everything else remains the same, however. We will still meet from 5-7, we'll still have games, dinner, and study with just the right amount of chaos. UMYF is open to all students who have begun middle school through those who are high school seniors. Join us in the church youth room this October and bring a friend!



Messy Church

Our next Messy Church will be on Tuesday, November 9th at 5:30 - 7:00 and wouldn't you know it, our theme will be on "Being Thankful".

It was definitely a good feeling to have in-person Messy Church back at St. Stephen's on September 27th. Although things looked a little different and we were careful to follow CDC guidelines for a safe evening, a great time was still had by all. S'mores were made, rocks were painted, and we all learned about the lessons the Bible can teach us about compassion.

Not sure what the fuss is about? Messy Church is an interactive worship service specifically for elementary-aged children and their families. Children will learn about the Bible or Christian life through activities, crafts, and games. At the end of each evening, they even have an opportunity to help lead a short worship service to reinforce what we all learned. Dinner for all the family is also served at 5:30. You don't have to be a member of St. Stephen's or any church to attend and it's all free.

Christmas Baskets

I know, I know! It's October. But, in order to support one of our most meaningful ministries, we need to start thinking about the Christmas Basket project that we do with Stevens Elementary. If you think you would like to be a gift shopper or a food shopping volunteer, please contact Steven Fisher. The details and numbers of families are still being figured out but you'll be added to our volunteer list and will be contacted soon.



Please submit dates, pictures and information for the November Evangel by October 25th to info@stsumc.org.

THE EVANGEL Vol. 26 Issue 10, October 1, 2021



The church does not belong to us

Johnson Memorial School News

The 54th school year at Johnson Memorial is underway and we are so thrilled to be back! A coffee truck greeted the parents after drop-off on the first day (September 9) to provide an opportunity for fellowship between returning and new families. Our 48 students are getting to know one another and learning all about school routines. For many children, this is their first experience away from parents and in a group learning environment due to the pandemic. Music continues to be an important part of each day as the skills they develop with Mrs. Paulk are so valuable! We are happy to share that our after-school classes are back this year so you may see kids dancing (Music Room) or playing soccer (Fellowship Hall) on Tuesdays, enjoying Stay 'n Play with our Helping Teachers outside on Wednesdays, and working on their gross motor skills all over the Fellowship Hall in Gymnastics on Thursdays. (article continued on page 7.)



October 2021 Highlights

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Worship Times Sunday School— Sunday, 9:30 am, Education Bldg Traditional Service— Sunday, 11:00 am, Sanctuary Virtual Service— 11:00 am, on Facebook and YouTube			For a more detailed calendar or to learn more about our church visit stshtx.org or call the church office. <u>For a list of recurring events, please see the next page.</u> *Register for events at stshtx.org CR=Choir Room FH=Fellowship Hall Sanc=Sanctuary			
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH 				 INTERNATIONAL COFFEE DAY OCTOBER 01		2 8am—Harris County Parent/Child Visitation-FH 
3 Communion Sunday 9:30am—Sunday School 11am—Worship 5pm—Great Heights	4 10am—Girl Scouts-201 7pm—Boy Scouts -Scout House	5 7-11am—JMS Spirit Morning-Common Bond 9:30am—Line Dancing-FH 6pm—Girl Scouts 7:30pm—Sea Scouts	6 9:30am—Senior Games-Café 	7 JMS Hearing & Vision Screenings 10am—Prayer Shawl Ministry-112 	8	9 11:30am—Red Hats Luncheon—A Moveable Feast 
10 9:30am—Sunday School, Confirmation Classes  11am—Worship 5pm—UMYF, 205	11 COLUMBUS DAY 10am—Girl Scouts-201 7pm—Boy Scouts -Scout House	12 9:30am—Line Dancing—FH  7:30pm—Sea Scouts-SH	13 9:30am—Senior Games-Café 	14 JMS Fire Truck Visit  10am—Prayer Shawl Ministry-112	15	16 8am—Visitation-FH 
17 9:30am—Sunday School 11am—Worship 5pm—Great Heights 	18 10am—Girl Scouts-201 7pm—Boy Scouts -Scout House	19 9:30am—Line Dancing-FH 6pm—Girl Scouts -200 7:30pm—Sea Scouts-SH	20 9:30am—Senior Games-Café 	21 JMS Constable Canine Visit 10am—Prayer Shawl Ministry-112 	22	23
24 Confirm Trip to Trinity UMC  9:30am—Sunday School 11am—Worship 5pm—UMYF, 205	25 Newsletter Deadline  10am—Girl Scouts-201 7pm—Boy Scouts -Scout House	26 9:30am—Line Dancing-FH  7:30pm—Sea Scouts-SH	27 9:30am—Senior Games-Café 	28 JMS Chapel Halloween Parade, Parties 10am—Prayer Shawl Ministry-112 12:30pm—JMS Chapel	29 	30 8am—Visitation-FH 4-6pm—Trunk or Treat 
31 	BIBLE STUDY AND SERMON CONVERSATION GREAT HEIGHTS 938 WAKEFIELD DR. 					



God is in our neighborhood and not just in our building

Get Involved

Breast Cancer Awareness

We would like to remind everyone that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an annual campaign to increase awareness of the disease. Information about the disease and pink ribbon pins for those who want to show their support for persons with breast cancer will be available in the Narthex (sanctuary foyer) throughout the month.

Red Hats Luncheon

Women of all ages are welcome to join the Red Hats for our monthly luncheon on Saturday, October 9, at noon, at A Moveable Feast Café, 9341 Katy Freeway (I-10) in the Echo Lane Shopping Center next to T J Maxx. The Rambling Reds of St. Stephen's meet monthly on the first or second Saturday to support and encourage women in their pursuit of fun, friendship, freedom, fulfillment and fitness. For more information or to RSVP for the luncheon, please contact Paula McNutt, hostess for October, at texascountrygal@att.net or 832-865-3165.

Trunk or Treat

We're excited about the return of this fun family Halloween event to St. Stephen's on Saturday, October 30, from 4-6 pm! If you interested in decorating your car for Trunk or Treat, please contact Steven Fisher at stven@stshtx.org or 713-686-8241, or Jenni Cave Ferrell at jenni.cave@me.com.



Fun4Seniors "Let's Talk Turkey"

Seniors had a blast in September at the first Fun4Seniors in-person luncheon held here since before the pandemic! They're looking forward to the next luncheon at St. Stephen's which will be held in the fellowship hall on Monday, November 1, at 11:30 am. The menu will include turkey and dressing with all the trimmings, at a cost of \$10 per person. The admission fee also includes live entertainment. Harris County Precinct 4, sponsor of the luncheons, says this "Thanksgiving" luncheon is the favorite of many of their guests, so make your reservation early as seats fill up fast. Adults age 50+ are welcome. Please RSVP to Fun4Seniors at 713-274-4050 or www.hcp4.net/encore/events.



What's on at St. Stephen's

WEEKLY EVENTS

- Sunday School**—Sun., 9:30am, Educational Bldg
- Worship**—Sun., 11am, Sanctuary & Online
- Girl Scouts**—Mon., 10am, Rm 201
- Boy Scouts Trop 604**—Mon., 7pm, Scout House
- Johnson Memorial School (JMS) Classes**—Tues., Wed., Thurs., 9am-1pm, Educational Bldg
- Line Dancing Class**—Tues., 9:30 am, Fellowship Hall
- Staff Meeting**—Tues., 1pm, Church Office
- JMS Dance, Soccer Shots**—Tues., 1pm, FH
- Senior Games**—Wed., 9:30am, Café
- JMS Stay-N-Play**—Wed., 1-3pm
- Prayer Shawl Ministry**—Thurs., 10am, Rm 112
- JMS Gymnastics**—Thurs., 1pm, FH

BI-MONTHLY EVENTS

- Bible Study & Sermon Conversation**—1st & 3rd Sunday, 5pm, Great Heights Brewing Company, 938 Wakefield Dr. Next meeting: October 3
- UMYF (United Methodist Youth Fellowship)**—2nd & 4th Sunday, 5pm, Rm 205 Next meeting: October 10
- Girl Scouts**—2nd & 4th Thurs., 6pm, Rm 200

MONTHLY EVENTS

- The Gathering Place**—second Monday, 10am-FH (a ministry for persons with Alzheimer's & their caregivers) Next Gathering: TBA
- Red Hats Luncheon**—1st or 2nd Saturday, usually at a restaurant. Next mtg: Oct. 9 @ noon @ A Moveable Feast, 9341 Katy Freeway

OTHER RECURRING EVENTS

- Confirmation Classes**—Sun., 9:30 am, Educational Bldg (see church calendar)
- Fun4Seniors Luncheon**—on a Monday of every other month (varies), 11:30, FH (RSVP to Fun4Seniors at 713-274-4050.) Next luncheon: November 1
- Harris County Parent/Child Visitation**—1st, 3rd & 5th Saturday, 8am-2pm, FH

FH=Fellowship Hall CR=Choir Room
For more information, visit stshtx.org.



Worship connects us with God and with each other

New Worship Series



October 10-November 21

October Communion Offering



Messy Church Fun



In Memory

We extend our prayers and sympathy to the family of **Ellie Larato**, who passed away September 8, 2021. Ellie joined St. Stephen's in January 2011 and was an active member, attending worship and Sunday School regularly until recently when she became seriously ill. She was always asking how she could help, and volunteered for many church ministries. Ellie served on the board at MANNA for several years. A memorial service was held for Ellie at St. Stephen's on September 28.

Our sympathy and prayers are also extended to the family of **Delight Clary**, who lost her battle with cancer on September 12, 2021. Delight was a member of another church in the area, but had several friends at St. Stephen's, as she participated in many of our senior ministries, small groups and events. Delight's funeral service was held on September 18 in Mexia, Texas.



Ellie Larato

Prayer Concerns

Dwight Allen, Mary Claire Armstrong, John & Dorothy Artz, Anita Bishop and daughters, Jeanie & Janya; Hilda Bluett (Steven Fisher's grandmother), Rhonda Boehm, Florence Bowman, Mary Brennan, Phyllis Burnette, Arlene Caler, Frank & Kathy Chambers, the family of Delight Clary, Chappie & Gloria Collins, Janet Cummins, Angela Earl, Allen Ebel, Kayla Ebel, Maurice Ebel, Mary Gail Ellis, Megan Eyre, Robert Faltisek, Blaine Fernandez, Bert & Charm Hensley, and Daniel Hernandez; Elizabeth Hickerson, Dorrie Jackson, the family of Ellie Larato, Dot Lockhart, Penny Loy, William Martin, Ann McIntire, Carol Owens, Dian Parker, Brenda Paulk, Eddie Pollard, Milton & Noni Ray, Rogers & Jane Roberts, Brian Robinson, Flora Sandt, Barbara Smith, Meranda Soto, Hazel Swearingen, Preston Taylor, Linda Warren, Paul Wieting, Dale Wilson, Todd Wilson, David Wright, Rick and Michelle Yarbrough, Judy Zanelli

Social Justice Prayers: The sin of racism and its effects on all of us; Members of the CITGO6: Tomeu Vadell, Gustavo Cardenas, Jorge Toledo, Alirio Zambrano, Jose Luis Zambrano, Jose Angel Pereira; and all who are imprisoned or persecuted unjustly

In the Military Allen Clutter

In Hospital

Brookdale Heights—Frances Mayberry (rehab)



The stories of scripture transform our own stories

Johnson Memorial School News (continued)

Since our enrollment is down from our full capacity of 57 children due to the pandemic, JMS has moved field trips and special events to the spring semester so funds can be raised to cover these expenses. Three wonderful parent volunteers have organized monthly School Spirit events at various local businesses – when making a purchase on a designated day/time, be sure to mention that you are there to support our little preschool and then a percentage is sent back to us! Our Fajita Pete’s event in September raised \$201.69 – wow! Our next event is at Common Bond on-the-go Bakery (3201 N. Shepherd) on Tuesday, October 5 from 7-11am – come enjoy coffee and pastry, or buy some fresh bread for dinner and support JMS at the same time!

JMS would like to give a special SHOUT OUT to Charles Davenport, the Asbury Sunday School class and Bill Webb for their generous donation – we have applied all of these funds to our spring special events and field trips!

Candice Croker

JMS Director - St. Stephens UMC

<http://www.stsumc.org/johnson-memorial-school/>






JOHNSON MEMORIAL SCHOOL SPIRIT MORNING

Common Bond On-The-Go in Garden Oaks is proud to partner with Johnson Memorial School on
Tuesday, October 5th | 7am - 11am.
Please tell the cashier that you are dining in support of Johnson Memorial School.



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The Evangelist

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Fun Fact

Only 586 days after our last in-person Messy Church, we met in the fellowship hall on September 27th! (See cover photo.)



Our Vision

-  We are all, without exception, beloved children of God
-  The church does not belong to us
-  God is in our neighborhood and not just in our building
-  Worship connects us with God and with each other
-  The stories of scripture transform our own stories

Readings

If you'd like to read along with the Scriptures we'll use in worship during the month of October, follow this reading guide!

- 10/3: James 5:13-20
- 10/10: Mark 10:17-31
- 10/17: Mark 10:35-45
- 10/24: Mark 10:46-52
- 10/31: Mark 12:28-34