



A CHRISTMAS GUEST



Research shows that people are more likely to visit a church during Christmas than any other time of the year. Many of these visitors are looking for what Laurel Heights has to offer: warmth, acceptance, love, compassion, grace, hope and a sense of belonging. Consultants meet with congregations all the time to help them appear more welcoming and there are shelves of books on things you can do to be “seeker friendly”. But the truth is, unless it comes from the heart, all the programs and techniques in the world will make little difference unless the qualities people are seeking are truly present. The old saying is especially true now, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” These qualities of the Gospel must come from the heart.

Congregations who truly embody these qualities will do the things recommended in books and by consultants and an outside perspective is often helpful to remind us of opportunities we may have missed. But people will know if they and others are truly welcome. Christmas gives us two opportunities: the opportunity to welcome and the opportunity to invite.

Laurel Heights United Methodist Church is ready to receive guests. Not being ready is like inviting a group of people to be your dinner guest and not setting enough places at the table. Even those who do come will realize the host didn’t expect everyone to show up. We have the room we need; we have multiple times available to meet a variety of schedules and a variety of ministries. We are ready to receive guests. All they need is an invitation.

As we gather to worship for our regular and special services through the holidays, look for opportunities to welcome others. Use the Golden Rule as your guide: How would you want to be welcomed if you were visiting a place for the first time? Welcome people as they are rather than where you think they should be or hope someday they will be. Every person was invited by one of your best friends in the congregation, one of the oldest members and most revered leaders, Christ himself.

Don’t be hesitant to invite people yourself. This is a loving and warm congregation. If you feel some hesitation in inviting your best friend, your supervisor, or a special relative, identify your concern and address it. Let me know if there is something I can do to help. I am always honored when I am invited to something that is important to someone special to me. I promise to welcome each person you invite as if I invited them myself. Or better yet, as if they were invited by Christ for a very special celebration and he asked me to help make sure they met people and felt welcomed.

See you Sunday,

Come, let us adore him



We will celebrate our 52nd annual Festival of Lessons and Carols on Sunday, Dec. 19 at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Lessons and Carols includes Christmas carols and Bible readings that vary from year to year, making each year unique. The form of service known as Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was instituted at Truro Cathedral, England, in 1880. It has continued there since that time and in other settings, significantly, King’s College Chapel, Cambridge, where it has been sung annually since 1918. Laurel Heights first began the service in 1958.

The service is free of charge and open to the public. A reception will follow in the gym. If you would like to contribute cookies for the reception, please contact Julie Mazel, 734-5703.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Services

♦ Children & Family, 4:00 pm

♦ 7:00 pm & 11:00 pm

Childcare Available at 4:00 & 7:00

For Reservations

733-7156

Other LHUMC News on Pages 4A & 8A

Epiphany Feast and the visit of the Wise Men



A long-standing tradition of Laurel Heights UMC is the celebration of Epiphany. On Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2011 we will again celebrate Epiphany with a feast and program explaining the traditions and Biblical foundation for the liturgical day. Epiphany means "manifestation" or "revelation".

If you plan to join us for the meal, call the church receptionist, 733-7156, or indicate on the Sunday attendance registration that you wish to make a reservation for the Epiphany Feast. The meal is served at 5:30 pm in the gym for the price of \$6 for adults and \$3 for children. (There is no cost or reservation required to attend the program without a meal.)

For many years the Kitchen Guild coordinated the Feast which included four meats: roast, ham, turkey and lamb. This year, David Saylor and Acadiana Café will prepare the turkey and accompanying dishes for the Feast. The roast, ham, and leg of lamb will be donated by members of the congregation. If you would like to prepare and donate a ham, leg of lamb, or roast, please contact Trudy Kinnison, 735-8345.

Traditionally, the dessert that goes with the Feast, the King's Cake, is donated and prepared by members of the congregation. If you would like to make a King's Cake, contact Willa Jo at willajo@hotmail.com.

The food and fellowship are always wonderful and the program is intergenerational, festive and educational. We hope to see you there.



Dear Laurel Heights,

It is with many mixed feelings that I write this letter to you. I was offered and have accepted a promotion to become the Staff Development Specialist for Wesley Nurse Health Ministries. (I will be transferring to the corporate office in the Medical Center.) My last day to serve as the Wesley Nurse at Laurel Heights UMC will be Thursday, Dec. 30, 2010. I have loved being the Wesley Nurse for you for the past three years, but this is a wonderful opportunity for me and my family, and I am very excited about it. Bryan, Brady, and I will continue to be active members at Laurel Heights, so you will still see me very often, but just not as often as you do now. Thank you for all of your love and support!

Blessings,
Elizabeth Woods



"I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power."

Ephesians 1:17-19 NRSV

Stephen Ministry

Christ helping people through people



This headline is *so* true! Find out how, why, and if Stephen Ministry training and service is a fit for you. Come to the Discovery Session on Thursday, Jan. 6 at 6:30 pm in the Parlor.

The next training class for Stephen Ministry begins on Friday, Jan. 21. Subsequent classes will be held, for the most part, on Thursday evenings.

If you already know that Stephen Ministry is a place where you want to serve, contact Don Clark, Ellen Evans, or Barb Kurtz for an application.

**Church Offices
Closed
Thursday,
Dec. 24 through
Monday, Dec. 27
and Thursday,
Dec. 30 through
Monday, Jan. 3**

Friends in the Faith

We are in the process of organizing this year's confirmation program and need adults ("Friends in the Faith") who are willing to walk with a young person on this 16-week journey. You meet weekly with your confirmand, attend the confirmation retreat, and participate in the life of the church with them. This is an amazingly meaningful time for both the young person and the adult that literally changes lives. Confirmation orientation is Sunday, Feb. 20. If you would like to do this, please call or e-mail Kercida at the church, 733-7156 ext. 37 or Kercida@mylhumc.org.

If you know of a young person (sixth grade or above) who we can include in the confirmation program, please call the church office and let us know.

**Handbells
Rehearsals Resume
Jan. 12**



DECEMBER

- 19 Andrew Bowerman; Laura Mitchell
- 20 Jill Sanders; Concepcion Garces
- 21 Patty Peacock
- 22 Wendell Davis
- 23 Faye Fox; Alice Johnson
- 24 Jimmy Barrett; Patti Vaughan
- 26 Bradley Jones; Brady Woods
- 27 David Douglas; Max Healy; Henrietta Hopper; Ashley Huron; Zachariah Zufall
- 28 Jill Caldwell; Dale Carver; Andrew Douglas; Liz Hughes; Dan Ratliff
- 29 John Harper Shaw; Charlotte Wenger
- 30 Noelle Guajardo; Sam McGlone
- 31 Charles Bailey; Mary McDavid

JANUARY

- 1 Chris Huron; Julie Mazel; Joe McMullen; Daniel Sarvis
- 2 Amy Eddy; Joshua Sanders
- 3 Jean Crutchfield; Larry Thompson
- 4 Zachary Huron; Sharon Malek; Oliver Peck; Olivia Peck
- 5 Hershel Homer
- 6 Kimberly Berry
- 7 Michaela Cowan
- 8 Greg Geerdes; John Meister; Bob Riddle; Harold Souder

Mission Statement

The mission of Laurel Heights United Methodist Church is to offer Christ to those we encounter and to nurture, equip, and enable persons to become committed Christians in our community and the world beyond.



Welcome to **Justin Nichols** who joined Laurel Heights by letter of transfer from another United Methodist Church on Nov. 29, 2010.

Welcome to **Josh and Karen Corbin** who joined Laurel Heights by profession of faith on Nov. 29, 2010.



When the list of 2011 Church Officers becomes available, you will be able to view the names and download a PDF document online at www.mylhumc.org/staffleadership/churchleadership.html

Centennial keepsake ornaments make great stocking stuffers

The beauty and excellent craftsmanship of the Centennial ornament makes a nice gift, especially at Christmas. Touting the Centennial logo and the church with spire (removed in the 1920s), each bronze engraving comes in a gift box. The ornaments are \$15 each and are available while supply lasts. To check availability, call Cathy in the church office, 733-7156 ext. 13. Please make your check payable to LHUMC and indicate "Christmas Ornament" in the memo field of your check.

CHURCH CALENDAR

*Childcare available.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:00-12:30 Labyrinth - 312
8:30 & 11:00 *Worship - Sanctuary
9:00 Blood Pressure / Sugar Checks - Dining Room
9:30 Fellowship Time - Dining Rm.
9:30 Tiny Tones - 106
9:30 Joyful Noise Choir - 313-A
10:00 Sunday School for all ages
10:00 LHUMC Choir Show Reunion Group - 201 (Sanctuary)
10:00 LHUMC Leads Worship at Chandler Center
12:00 Youth Ministry Council - 319
7:00 Festival of Lessons & Carols - Sanctuary
8:00 L&C Reception - Gym
10:00 Youth Lock-in - 319

Monday, December 20

7:30 WDS ACE Program (M-W)
8:00-5:00 SA Youth @ LHUMC (Mon. & Tue.) - Gym
9:00-7:00 Labyrinth (M-F) - 312
1:00 Knitpickers - Laurel Room
5:30 Trustees - Parlor
6:00 Emmaus Reunion Group - DR
6:30 Gamblers Anonymous - 313-B

Tuesday, December 21

10:00 Walk to Bethlehem - DR
5:30 Bexar County Detention Ministries - Dining Room
6:15 Stephen Ministry - 313-B

Wednesday, December 22

11:00 Staff Meeting - 313-B
4:30 Line Dancing - 312
5:30 *Supper - Dining Room
6:15 *Worship - Scott Chapel
6:30 Disciple I - Parlor
7:00 Chancel Choir - Choir Room

Thursday, December 23

9:00 Church Mice meet for fellowship and to do repairs around the church (open to all)
10:00 Walk to Bethlehem - DR

Friday, December 24

Church Offices Closed
4:00 Family Candlelight Communion Service - Sanctuary
7:00 Candlelight Communion Service - Sanctuary
11:00 Candlelight Communion Service - Sanctuary

Saturday, December 25

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JESUS
All Buildings Closed

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS
8:00-12:30 Labyrinth - 312
8:30 & 11:00 *Worship - Sanctuary
9:30 Fellowship Time - Dining Rm.
9:30 Tiny Tones - 106
9:30 Joyful Noise Choir - 313-A
10:00 Sunday School for all ages
4:00 Student Ministries (Middle School) - 319
5:30 Student Ministries (High School) - 319

Monday, December 27

Church Offices Closed
7:30 WDS ACE Program (M-W)

Tuesday, December 28

8:00-5:00 SA Youth @ LHUMC (Tue.-Thu.) - Gym
10:00 Walk to Bethlehem - DR
5:30 Bexar County Detention Ministries - Dining Room

Wednesday, December 29

11:00 Church Staff - 313-B
4:30 Line Dancing - 312
5:30 *Supper - Dining Room
6:15 *Worship - Scott Chapel
6:30 Disciple I - Parlor
7:00 Chancel Choir - Choir Room

Thursday, December 30

Super Adults New Years at the Gaylord Texan (Thu.-Sat.)
9:00 Church Mice meet for fellowship and to do repairs around the church (open to all)
10:00 Walk to Bethlehem - DR

Friday, December 31

All Offices Closed

Saturday, January 1

HAPPY NEW YEAR
All Buildings Closed

SUNDAY, JANUARY 2

EPIPHANY SUNDAY
8:00-12:30 Labyrinth - 312
8:30 & 11:00 *Worship - Sanctuary
9:30 Fellowship Time - Dining Rm.
9:30 Tiny Tones - 106
9:30 Joyful Noise Choir - 313-A
10:00 Sunday School for all ages
10:00 LHUMC Leads Worship at Chandler Center

4:00 Student Ministries (Middle School) - 319

5:30 Student Ministries (High School) - 319

Monday, January 3

Church Offices Closed
9:00 Body Recall (M-W-F) - 312

Tuesday, January 4

9:00-7:00 Labyrinth (Tue. & Wed.) - 312
9:30 UMW Exec. Comm. - Parlor
10:00 Walk to Bethlehem - DR
3:00-7:00 SA Youth @ LHUMC (Tue.-Fri.) - Gym

Wednesday, January 5

11:00 Staff Meeting - 313-B
4:30 Line Dancing - 312
5:30 *Epiphany Feast & Program - Gym
6:30 Disciple I - Parlor
7:00 Chancel Choir - Choir Room

Thursday, January 6

9:00 Church Mice meet for fellowship and to do repairs around the church (open to all)
10:00 Walk to Bethlehem - DR
5:45 Church under the Bridge - Leave from Woodlawn Lot
6:30 Stephen Minister Discovery Session (open to all) - Parlor
6:30 Gamblers Anonymous - 313-B

Friday, January 7

6:30 Parents' Night Out (Reservations by noon 733-7156)

Saturday, January 8

8:30 Gamblers Anonymous - 313-B
9:00 MOPS Steering Comm. - 105
10:00 MOPS Gathering - 105

"Go Green" Sunday, January 9

At 10:00 am in the Parlor on Sunday, Jan. 9, the Reverend Dr. Art Mills, ordained minister of the Presbyterian church, will share with us the theological understanding of stewardship of God's resources. He has a rich history of environmental teaching and projects to offer us. There will also be a Green Fair with ideas about what we can do individually, corporately, and as a faith community.

Christmas offerings help church operating budget

Christmas offering envelopes will be available in December if you would like to make an extra gift toward the 2010 church budget. Please indicate "Christmas" in the note field of your check and drop in the offering plate or mail to LHUMC, Attn: Bookkeeper, 227 W. Woodlawn, San Antonio, TX 78212.

GIFTS IN MEMORIAM

General Budget

LORRAINE PAUL

by
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Kurtz

General Memorials

GRADY REED

by
Steve & Karen Cooper

Music Fund

CHARLES MYERS

by
Jerry & Carolyn Crockett

ANNE RANTA

by
Jerry & Carolyn Crockett

Gloria Sparkman

Pastor's Discretionary

E. M. CHANDLER

by
Gloria Sparkman

CHARLES MYERS

by
Gloria Sparkman

Organ Fund

CHARLES MYERS

by
Darla Peek

January Mission: SAMP Shelter

San Antonio Metropolitan Ministry (SAMP) was started in 1981 when First Presbyterian Church downtown began offering its gym as a shelter for the homeless. Since that time, SAMP has grown (a hotel facility is now used) to the point where a staff of 70 workers join with 4500 volunteers to sustain a comprehensive ministry for those who are homeless or in great need. In addition to immediate shelter, SAMP Ministries provides an array of programs and services available to the homeless of San Antonio. Programs offered to guests include life skills, job training, financial management, computer skills, parenting classes and more.

Please plan to give your support to this established and effective ministry with your communion rail and Wednesday night table offerings.

End-of-year giving

As 2010 quickly draws to a close, remember that in order for those last minute contributions to the church to be included on your 2010 Record of Contributions they must be received in the church office by noon on Wednesday, Dec. 29. If mailed, your envelope must bear a postmark date no later than Dec. 31, 2010.

Fear of falling?

A Matter of Balance is an award-winning program that can help reduce the fear of falling and increase the activity levels of older adults who have concerns about falling. Participants learn to set realistic goals for increasing activity, change their environment to reduce fall risk factors and promote exercise to increase strength and balance. Classes are now forming; class size is limited. Sessions are 10:00 am to 12:00 noon Tuesdays beginning Jan. 11 and ending March 1, 2011. To register, call 733-7156.



Healing: Rebecca Mayes; Myrle Deaton; Harold Souder; Martha Hamil; Mary & James Verette; Mindy Lanoux; Roxane Darnell; Nancy Fassnidge; Richard Jackson; Leona Coker; Shelley McMullen.

Those Who Mourn: Dr. and Mrs. Reeves Smith on the death of his brother, Whitley Smith.

Remember our shut-ins and those in the military.



CONTACT US

Main (210) 733-7156

Fax 737-3920

School 732-6979

Super Adults 733-6482

Clergy

Rev. Jim McClain x34
Pastor

Programming

Deaconess Judy Davis x18
Community Outreach
Susan Holloway 733-6482
Super Adult Director
Kercida McClain x37
Christian Education Director
Paul Seeman x17
Youth Director
Geoffrey Waite x19
Director of Music
Dr. Anne Wier 732-6979
Weekday School Director
Elizabeth Woods RN BSN x36
Wesley Nurse

Office

Louise Dudley x29
Bookkeeper
Cathy Everhart x13
Publications Editor
Elizabeth Jackson x12
Administrative Secretary
Jimmy Barrett x10
Receptionist

The issue date of this bi-weekly publication is the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month. Deadline for submitting news is 5:00 pm on 1st & 3rd Thursdays. Mail to: Messenger Editor, 227 W. Woodlawn, San Antonio, TX 78212 or send an email to: cathy@mylhumc.org.