



Advent Creation



For many, Thanksgiving marks the beginning of the Christmas season. The day after Thanksgiving you begin to hear others talk about how little time there is to get everything done and how Christmas really snuck up on them this year. There are lights to be strung, presents to be bought and wrapped, stockings to be hung, trees to be decorated, cookies to bake, and at least two or three dishes to prepare for various parties. It is a busy time and it all has to get done.

The reason some actively prepare for December 25th is simple. If we didn't, the family traditions we cherish would cease.

Overlapping the Christmas Holiday season, for which we so actively prepare, is the spiritual season of Advent.

This period is thought by most Christians to be a time of prayer and penitence leading up to the coming of Christ. Knowing this, it is understandable why purple symbolizes the season of advent and lent. Traditionally, both seasons are about reflection, repentance, and preparing for the presence of "God with us". Interestingly, many of us end up waiting for the celebration of the coming of Christ while actively preparing for a celebration of another sort. Consider a season of advent where Christians around the world actively prepare for the celebration of the birth of Christ with the same gusto and urgency that we do the secular holiday.

Dr. Seuss, in his book, *Oh, the Places You'll Go*, describes "The Waiting Place" as a "most useless place," where many are waiting for things to happen and thus fixed in a state of perpetual procrastination. Advent is not a "waiting place". We are invited to actively wait for the birth of Christ, preparing for being in the presence of Christ, in the same way we diligently practice the holiday traditions we hold so dear.

As we approach this season of advent, let us remember that God is active in creation each and every day and that we as Christians cannot become stagnant in our relationship assuming God has finished creating us. Rather than passively waiting for Christ's birthday, let us continue to diligently work towards a more perfect love for God with the anticipation that Christ will come.

Each Sunday of Advent we will celebrate the creative nature of God through art. You are God's great masterpiece whom God called "very good". Enjoy the parties, decorations, festivities and I want to thank Emmy, my daughter-in-law, for her help in the creation of this article, but remember the best is yet to come. God is not finished yet.

See you Sunday,

Jim

Living Out the Advent Story

How do we all - busy as we are - live out the Advent Story? How do we celebrate this great mystery in our everyday lives? Pastor Jim McClain will share his thoughts and experience with Stephen Ministers on Tuesday, Dec 6 at 6:15 pm in Room 313-B. Stephen Ministers invite you to participate in this interesting and inspiring conversation.

Why should I attend Church Conference?

The election of lay leadership within the congregation is one of the duties of Church Conference, which then holds each committee accountable to the Church Conference. Each committee member then makes decisions on behalf of you, the congregation, based on what they believe to be the purposes and vision of this church.

When we become a member of this local church body and The United Methodist Church, we covenant to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness. The faithful leadership by our laity is a wonderful expression of this covenant, but they need the support of each church member. If their lay leadership role makes them the "head", then we must be the arms and legs that carry on the work of the church through our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness. Prayerfully consider your presence at Church Conference on Sunday, Dec. 4 and how God might use you to help bring focus to our vision and goals.

Members of other local United Methodist congregations will be here; our congregation will meet in the fellowship hall at 3 pm. At 4 pm all of the congregations will come together for a time of community celebration, communion and worship in the sanctuary.

"God Creating Among Us"

During both worship services on Sunday, Dec. 4, Roseanne White will do a visual representation of "God creating among us" through her artistic expression of weaving on the loom. Our alternate giving focus that day is socks and underwear for Christian Assistance Ministry and Davidson Respite House and school uniforms for children at Cotton Elementary and Twain Middle schools.

Then, at both services on Dec. 11, the Third Sunday of Advent, we will watch as a blank canvas comes to life under the skillful hands of Melissa Waite through her selections of paint and space, dark and light. Giving art supplies for SAY Si and San Antonio Children's Shelter is that day's focus. If you wish to contribute, please bring your items to the church and we will distribute appropriately.

The last Sunday of Advent (Dec. 18) will feature Alice Hahn (former LHUMC member) who will express the Magnificat (Mary's song) in dance.

Other LHUMC News on Pages 4A & 8A

LHUMC exterior signage project gets "green light"

Prior to 2010 the exterior signage at Laurel Heights had not been reviewed, corrected or improved for many years. Since 2010 the Property Committee has reviewed, researched, planned, and prepared a comprehensive plan for improved exterior signage for all of the Laurel Heights property. The plan has been presented to and approved by the necessary committees of the church, i.e., Program Council, Board of Stewards, and Board of Trustees, as well as the Historic Design and Review Commission of the City of San Antonio. The plan is now ready for execution.

The money in the trustee budget for the remainder of 2011 and the new budget for 2012 has been committed to the necessary operations and repairs in our building so the budget is therefore unable to accommodate purchasing all of the new signs as planned and approved. In an effort to allow the project to gain momentum, the Finance Committee has approved a special fundraiser among the congregation for the Signage Project. We can now offer the congregation, either individuals or groups, the opportunity to donate for the purchase of the new signage.

The church website will soon have areas to view the complete plan, design of the signs, and placement of the new signs for the sign project. Visit <http://www.mylhunc.org/readingroom/newsevents.html> to check for updates.

If an individual or a group wishes to participate in this endeavor, they may choose a particular sign or a type of sign to donate to or make a general donation to the project. Make your check payable to Laurel Heights UMC with "Sign Project" noted in the memo field of your check. Your financial participation in this project will allow us to see improvements on our property in a timely manner.

Below is a list of the types of signs needed, the number of signs, and the approximate cost of each. All prices include installation.

Description of Sign	Number Needed	Cost Each, incl. Installation
Post & Panel	9	\$900
Bronze Lettering on Porte Cochere	1	cost pending
Small Entry/Exit	2	\$500
Bronze Plaque: Sanctuary	1	\$475
Bronze Plaque: Columbarium	1	\$650
Wall Panel	2	\$250
Repair Existing Permanent Signs	2	\$1,100

Conspirare's Christmas Concert, Dec. 2 at Laurel Heights UMC

On Friday evening, Dec. 2, the Grammy-nominated Austin-based choral ensemble, Conspirare: A Company of Voices, will present its immensely popular yearly Christmas program in the sanctuary at 7 pm. If you enjoy creative, intelligent, blended programming, and the highest quality choral singing, this is not to be missed. Tickets will be available at the door.



Book Review, December 12

At 10:30 am on Monday, Dec. 12, Susan Holloway will review *The Christmas Wedding* by James Patterson and Richard DiLallo. The small town of Stockbridge may never be the same. Gabby Summerhill, after three years of widowhood, has informed her four children that she is going to remarry. The wedding will be Christmas Day, and she is telling no one (not even the groom) who she is marrying until that day. Her children, who have not celebrated Christmas together since their father's death, are curious enough to come. Even the three men who proposed to Gabby on the same day are willing to wait to learn who the lucky one will be. When three hopeful grooms, four children, spouses, significant others, and grandchildren come together, surprises erupt. This is a fresh look at family and the magic of the season.

Coffee will be available at 10 am in Scott Chapel. Admission to the Review is by season ticket or \$3 at the door.



Welcome to **Tara Davis** as who joined Laurel Heights UMC on October 23, 2011 by letter of transfer.

Welcome to **Beth Thomas** who joined Laurel Heights UMC on November 6, 2011 by letter of transfer from another denomination.

Welcome to **Joel Dixon** who joined Laurel Heights UMC on November 13, 2011 by profession of faith and wife **Roseann** who joined the same day by letter of transfer from another denomination and their son Jacob Phillip Dixon who joined that day by infant baptism.

53rd Festival celebrated Sunday, Dec. 18

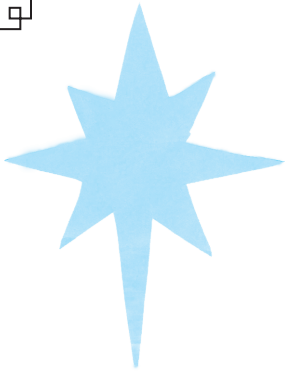
This year's Festival is the 53rd at Laurel Heights. The Festival of Lessons and Carols includes Christmas carols and Bible readings that vary from year to year, making each year unique. The form of service known as Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was instituted at Truro Cathedral, England, in 1880. 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.

Mark your calendar for Sunday, Dec. 18 at 7 pm in the Sanctuary. The service is free of charge and open to the public. A reception will follow in the gym. Anyone interested in contributing cookies for the reception should contact Julie Mazel, 734-5703.



DECEMBER

- 5 Juanita Souder; Penny Viola
- 7 Audrey Patrice Garcia; Ed Pendleton
- 8 Diane Irwin Grant; Stephen Hall; Martha Hamil
- 9 Sue Carter; Sam Dibrell; Jocelyn Isabelle Evelyn Reed
- 10 Stephen Cavazos; Wynne Bradley Jones
- 11 James Meister; John Merson
- 12 Jed Dorsey; Donald Redmond
- 14 Hallie Saylor; Elaina Taylor
- 15 Kenneth Henry; Bryan Woods
- 16 Marilyn McNeel



United Methodist Women
invite you to a
Christmas Luncheon and
Program
Laurel Heights United
Methodist Church
227 West Woodlawn Avenue
December 13, 2011 at 11:30 a.m.
R.S.V.P.
Liz Hughes, 680-4262, or
Mally Walden, 366-4581, 859-5902

CHURCH CALENDAR

*Childcare available.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:30 & 11:00 *Worship / Holy Communion - *Sanctuary*
 9:30 *Fellowship Time-Dining Rm.
 9:30 Tiny Tones Choir (preschool - 1st Grade) - 105
 9:30 Joyful Noise Choir (2nd-5th Grade) - 313-A
 9:30 Youth Chimes - *Choir Room*
 10:00 *Sunday School for all ages
 10:00 LHUMC leads worship at Chandler
 3:00 Church Conference - *DR*
 4:00 Middle School Student Ministries (UMYF) - 319
 5:30 High School Student Ministries (UMYF) - 319
 6:30 Disciple 1 - *Library*

Monday, December 5

1:00 Knitpickers - *Laurel Room*
 3:00-7:00 SA Youth @ LHUMC (Mon.-Fri.) - *Gym*
 6:30 Gamblers Anonymous - 313-B

Tuesday, December 6

7:45 Taco Tuesday Devotions (Paul Seeman) - *Alamo Hgts. Jr. High*
 8:45 Yoga Class - 312
 9:30 United Methodist Women Executive Committee - *Parlor*
 10:30 Positive Parenting Class- 319
 12:30 MELD Parenting Group -*DR*
 6:00 Super Adults St. Nicholas Day on Riverwalk
 6:15 Stephen Ministry (all invited; Rev. McClain "Advent") - 313-B

Wednesday, December 7

7:30 Executive Comm. - *Foundry*
 8:45 Church Staff Meeting - 313-B
 10:00 Super Adult Steering- *Parlor*
 11:30 Let's Eat Out - *Church Bus*
 2:00 *Disciple 1 - *Library*
 3:00 SA Youth @ LHUMC Christmas Party - *Gym*
 4:30 Line Dancing - 312
 5:30 *Supper -*Dining Room*
 6:15 *Worship (Rev. Robin Hiatt-Reed) - *Scott Chapel*
 6:15 Handbells- *Sanctuary Balcony*
 7:00 Chancel Choir - *Choir Room*

Thursday, December 8

10:00 Building & Grounds - 306
 6:30 Education Committee - *Parlor*
 6:30 Gamblers Anonymous - 313-B

Friday, December 9

10:00 Church Women United Board Meeting - *Parlor*
 6:30 Parents' Night Out (RSVP by 12 noon @ 733-7156)

Saturday, December 10

8:30 Gamblers Anonymous- 313-B
 9:30 Believers Class Christmas Party - *Dining Room*
 10:00 MOPS Gathering - 105
 10:30 Board of Stewards - 312
 5:30-10:00 Weekday School
 Babysitting Fundraiser- 732-6979

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:30 & 11:00 *Worship - *Sanctuary*

8:30-1:00 Blood Drive - *Gym*
 9:30 *Fellowship Time-Dining Rm.
 9:30 Tiny Tones Choir (preschool - 1st Grade) - 105
 9:30 Joyful Noise Choir (2nd-5th Grade) - 313-A
 9:30 Youth Chimes Choir (6th-12th Grade) - *Choir Room*
 10:00 *Sunday School for all ages
 4:00 Middle School Student Ministries (UMYF) - 319
 4:30 UMW Elizabeth Circle- 313-B
 5:30 High School Student Ministries (UMYF) - 319
 6:30 Disciple 1 - *Library*

Monday, December 12

10:30 Super Adult Book Review- *Scott Chapel*
 1:00 Knitpickers - *Laurel Room*
 3:00-7:00 SA Youth @ LHUMC (Mon.-Thu.) - *Gym*
 4:30 Super Adults Hill Country Lights
 6:30 Gamblers Anonymous - 313-B

Tuesday, December 13

7:30 Health Cabinet - *The Foundry*
 7:45 Taco Tuesday Devotions (Paul Seeman) - *Alamo Hgts. Jr. High*
 8:45 Yoga Class - 312
 10:30 Positive Parenting Class- 319
 11:30 Stephen Leaders - *Laurel Rm.*
 11:30 United Methodist Women Christmas Luncheon- *Dining Rm.*
 12:30 MELD Parenting Group -*DR*
 5:30 Bexar County Detention Support Groups - *Dining Room*
 6:30 Stephen Ministry Christmas Party - *Home of Colleen & Ted Bailey*

Wednesday, December 14

8:45 Church Staff Meeting- 313-B
 10:30 Positive Parenting Class- 319
 2:00 *Disciple 1 - *Library*
 4:00 Positive Parenting Class - 319
 4:30 Line Dancing at Chandler
 4:30 Property Committee - *Library*
 5:30 Advent Festival -*Dining Room*
 5:30 *Supper - *Gym*
 6:00 Women's Book Group - *Laurel Room*
 6:15 *Worship (Rev. Robin Hiatt-Reed) - *Scott Chapel*
 6:15 Handbells- *Sanctuary Balcony*
 7:00 Chancel Choir - *Choir Room*

Thursday, December 15

9:00 Super Adult Day - *DR, Gym*
 9:00 Church Mice meet for fellowship and to do repairs around the church
 5:30 Staff Parish Relations Committee - *Laurel Room*
 5:30 Library Committee - *Library*
 6:30 Gamblers Anonymous- 313-B
 7:00 Worship Committee - *Parlor*

Friday, December 16

7:00 Super Adults Norwegian Country Christmas-*Regent Coach*

Saturday, December 17

8:30 Gamblers Anonymous- 313-B
 9:00 Program Council - 312
 10:00 Lessons & Carols Rehearsal - *Sanctuary*

December Mission: Cross-Health Ministries

Cross-Health Ministries is a San Antonio-based mission that is especially active in Mexico. The ministry's purpose is 2-fold: † to provide & facilitate health care to children & adults in impoverished areas around the world; and † to collect and distribute donated medical and surgical supplies to individuals and health care facilities.

To date, Cross-Health Ministries has accomplished: 1) Medical Mission trips to Mexico and Guatemala; 2) special activities, i.e. children's Christmas parties; 3) delivering about 1,000 pairs of donated shoes each year to children in need; 4) responding to individual health care needs including supply trips; 5) crisis response, i.e. flood relief; and 6) donations to other mission teams and health agencies in 27 countries around the world. It also helps support the House of Peace and Love Orphanage in Piedras Negras, Mexico.

Your communion rail and Wednesday night table offerings in December go to Cross-Health Ministries. To give anytime during the month, please write "Cross-Health Ministries" in the memo line of your check.

Give the Gift of Life



Each day of the year an increasing number of sick and injured people depend on generous, healthy, volunteer blood donors to give the gift of life. In fact, a single unit of blood can help save the lives of many people. The South Texas Blood and Tissue Center will be at Laurel Heights UMC on Sunday, Dec. 11 from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm in the Gym. To sign up, contact Wesley Nurse Christina Galvan, 733-7156.

Christmas Party for youth center

The church is hosting a Christmas Party for children of SA Youth at Laurel Heights United Methodist Church on Wednesday, Dec. 7. USAA is providing presents for the children and the church is providing pizza.

Poinsettias in December



I/We wish to make a donation of \$10 to help purchase poinsettia plants to decorate and beautify the sanctuary in December. My/Our gift is given...

in Honor of _____

in Memory of _____

My name: _____

Phone: _____

Include this coupon with check made payable to LHUMC and mail to LHUMC, Attn: Bookkeeper, 227 W. Woodlawn, SAT 78212. Deadline: Sunday, Dec. 12, 2011. Total limit: 70 plants.



Healing: Jane Magavern; Charles Schneider; Patti Vaughan; Geraldine Douglas; Roxane Darnell; Fred Vaca; and Lucille Warren.

Those Who Mourn: Family of Myrle Deaton who died Nov. 15; Tom Morton & family in loss of his mother, Arlene Morton, Nov. 16.

God's Presence: Hattie Tucker & family; Ricky Bailey and family; 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

Susan Holloway 733-6482
 Super Adult Director
 Kercida McClain x36
 Christian Education Director
 Paul Seeman x17
 Youth Director
 Geoffrey Waite x19
 Director of Music
 Dr. Anne Wier 732-6979
 Weekday School Director
 Christina Galvan, RN, BSN
 x37 - Wesley Nurse

Office

Clyta Coder, Kayla Hester,
 and Jessica Lewis x10
 Receptionists
 Louise Dudley x29
 Bookkeeper
 Cathy Everhart x13
 Publications Editor
 Elizabeth Jackson x12
 Administrative Secretary

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@mylhunc.org.