



# The Epistle

Volume 46, Issue 4

Leading people to experience God's love, know Jesus Christ, and grow in His image.

February 23, 2020



We all are broken people. It is only through the cross of Jesus that we are made whole. The Stephen Minister is the Care Giver. Christ is the Cure Giver.

## STEPHEN MINISTRY

Come and meet our newest Stephen Ministers, care-givers available to provide confidential, one-to-one Christian care to persons experiencing difficulties in life such as changes in relationships, family, employment, relocation, finances, health, spiritual needs, and more.



These women and men will be commissioned into service on Sunday, March 8, in the 11 o'clock service of worship. A reception will immediately follow in the Connection Corner of the Gathering Area. We hope you will join us to give them a warm welcome and thanks!

Contact Pastor Wynn at ext. 275 or  
[wynn.s@bethany-umc.org](mailto:wynn.s@bethany-umc.org) to learn more  
and to connect with a Stephen Minister.

# From the Pastor

## God is our Peace

As we began our Church Conference on Sunday, the Reverend Kendall Waller shared some verses from Isaiah 43:

"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name, you are mine.  
2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;  
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,  
and the flame shall not consume you.  
3 For I am the LORD your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior."

He reminded us that God is with us no matter what. God is our God and we are His people. No matter what.

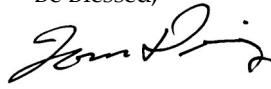
As he shared with us, I remembered one of our prayer warriors suggesting the image of seeing myself as being in the eye of the hurricane. Though everything around me is whirling and crashing, I stand in the calm and peace of the eye when I stand in the presence of God. That image has touched me deeply and given me great comfort in these days.

In September of 1961, Hurricane Carla hit the Texas coast at Port O'Connor, just south of Victoria, where we lived at the time. I was five years old. I remember how our house shook. I could hear objects hitting the side of our home and glass breaking. At one point, as the roof separated, I could hear splintering wood. The wind sounded like a train passing by a few feet away. It was overwhelming and frightening. Then suddenly, it stopped. Silence was all I heard. As my parents scrambled to salvage and reinforce and board over broken windows, I went into the backyard. It was full of all kinds of fun new things. Actually, it was the debris of the storm and probably not safe, but hey, I was five! The sun was out, birds were singing, and the sky was blue. I was having such a good time, I didn't notice the approach of the storm wall. My parents had to find me and drag me in before the storm began again, but to this day, I remember the deep sense of peace and stillness in that moment.

As we move into these turbulent times in the life of the United Methodist Church, I am finding that memory and image precious. When everything begins to whirl and holler and become confusing and overwhelming, I join God's Spirit in a place of stillness and serenity. I listen for God's voice saying, "you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you," (vs. 4). I remember that God still holds the future, no matter how overwhelming the present feels, and I find peace in His presence and His love. I invite you to join me there.

God has called you by name. God has called me by name. God has called us by name. We are claimed and loved. In the midst of it all, God is our Peace.

Be Blessed,



## Prayers



### CELEBRATIONS:

**BIRTH:** Nora Clare Lutz—2/7 to Mary & Michael Lutz  
(grandparents are David Lutz & Karen Roller; great-grandparents are Dave & Lee Lutz)

### CONCERNS:

**DEATHS:** Ernest Oeltjen (Dave Oeltjen's father) - 2/5 MN

*Pray to know Christ, not to solve a crisis. Come into a relationship with God Who loves you.*



## Welcome to the Prayer Corner

With just a list of names and a simple prayer guide, you are set to be a part of the **Family Prayer Team**  
Contact Rita:  
[ritajthompson20@gmail.com](mailto:ritajthompson20@gmail.com)



## Financial Update, Continued

Thank you for listening to our Finance Committee

update last week in worship and for the new or increased pledges we have received over the last week! We are on our way toward meeting our 2020 budget, but we remain well below last year's income levels. In March, we will review our church's programming and determine if we will have to adjust that budget based on the number and amount of pledges we have received. If you haven't already, please consider giving so that we can do the things we believe God is calling us to do this year.

For questions about annual financial giving, please contact the church office so we can put you in touch with our staff. To make a pledge, email [jane.herbst@bethany-umc.org](mailto:jane.herbst@bethany-umc.org), place a pledge card in the offering plate at worship, or send a card in by mail. Pledge cards can be found in the office or on the Welcome Desk. Thank you again!

### Seeing Can Be Believing Class

Follow the Scriptures, watch Hollywood movies and discern where "poetic license" comes in through imagination, creativity, and simple untruths.

This is a great class for visual learners and those who want to know how the Bible fits together as one story.

**Wednesdays, March 4 to May 6**  
**9:30-11:30am, Room D203-204**

Facilitated by Connie Ruple and Karen Garrison  
Contact: [conniecooker@hotmail.com](mailto:conniecooker@hotmail.com), 512-258-7096

**Want to know more about the UMC General Conference 2020?**  
**Visit [bethany-umc.org/GC2020](http://bethany-umc.org/GC2020).**

## Upcoming Sermon Topics:

For the full series list and for audio recordings of past sermons, please visit the website at [www.bethany-umc.org](http://www.bethany-umc.org).

**2/22 & 2/23 Children's Sabbath**

*Pastor Jessica preaching all services*

**2/29 & 3/1 Lent—see page 5**



## Wednesday Fellowship Meals!

**5:15-6:30pm in Fellowship Hall**

Let someone else do the cooking! Join us on Wednesday evenings for dinner and fellowship. Dinner is served continuously.

**Dinner Prices:** Adult \$7 Youth \$6 Seniors \$6

Children: 3 yr - 5th gr \$4 2 yr & under Free  
Family Ticket (parents & children in high school or younger) \$23 Max

### February 26

Ash Wednesday—No Wednesday Fellowship Meal!

### March

Soup Suppers—see page 5

## Musicians/Vocalists for Chapel Service

Are you a musician looking for a place to share your talent? The 9:30 AM Sunday Chapel Service featuring Taizé style music is seeking instrumentalists and vocalists.

For information, contact Thomas Dowdy at [dowdythomas1@gmail.com](mailto:dowdythomas1@gmail.com)





## How the UMC Works

### Who Leads the Global UMC?

As part of our ongoing "How the UMC Works" series, today we discuss Bishops and the Judicial Council.

#### What is a Bishop?

Bishops are ordained elders of the United Methodist Church and serve as administrative and pastoral superintendents of the church. A Bishop presides over each Annual Conference. Bishops are first nominated by the delegates of an annual conference and then elected by the delegates of the Jurisdictional Conference.

Once elected, Bishops are assigned to one or more Annual Conferences. Bishops preside over their Annual Conference and rule on questions of church law at the Annual Conference, as well as supervise and assign pastors to the various local churches in the Annual Conference.

#### What is the difference between the College of Bishops and the Council of Bishops?

A College of Bishops refer to all Bishops within a specific jurisdictional conference. The Council of Bishops is composed of all the elected active and retired bishops in the worldwide UMC.

#### What is the Judicial Council?

The Judicial Council is similar to the Supreme Court of the United States government. It is made up of 9 members of clergy and laity and serves as the highest judicial body in the UMC. They are elected by the General Conference and consider whether actions of the various church bodies adhere to the constitution and follow the rules outlined in the Book of Discipline. The Judicial Council has authority to determine the constitutionality of any act of the General, Annual or Jurisdictional Conference board or body.

To learn more about UMC Bishops and Judicial Council, visit [bethany-umc.org/umcworks](http://bethany-umc.org/umcworks).

## Easter Butterfly Ministry Workshops!

February 26 & March 4, 11

4:30-6:30 pm

Bethany Café



*Remember how beautiful all the Easter butterflies were last year?*

Crocheters and knitters are needed to prepare another fabulous *kaleidoscope* of butterflies. If you don't crochet you can still help!

Assembly of butterflies is easy and can be done by anyone, no crochet skills needed.

Contact [Carla@young-techno.com](mailto:Carla@young-techno.com) with any questions!

Crochet patterns (both for the smaller thread butterflies and an easier yarn pattern) for the butterflies are in the church office or can be emailed to you. Yarn/thread is also available if needed.



Come join us for a fun evening with your friends, while your parents go out with theirs!

**Saturday, March 7**

**4:00-9:00 p.m.**

**Pizza! Movies! Games!**

Cost: \$25, \$10 per additional sibling, \$45 family max  
Register online beginning Saturday, February 22, at

8:00 a.m. at [www.bethany-umc.org/moms](http://www.bethany-umc.org/moms)  
(Register soon—space limited to 25 kids)

Questions? [Christin.smith@bethany-umc.org](mailto:Christin.smith@bethany-umc.org)



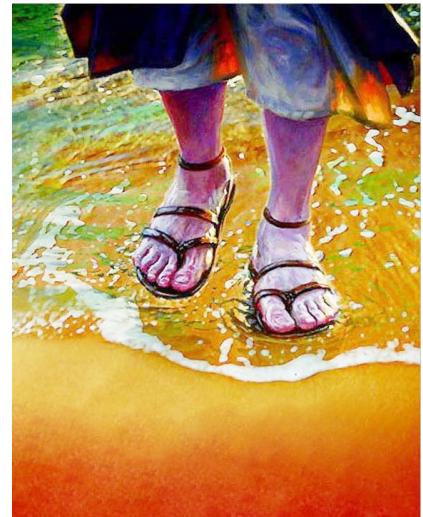
# Join Us for Worship During Lent

## Sermon Series (Saturday & Sunday Worship Services)

# *The Way: Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus*

*(Series by Rev. Adam Hamilton)*

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| February 29 & March 1 | “Baptism and Temptation” (the Jordan River and the Wilderness)<br>Sat: Sheri Clifton      Sun: Tom Deviney |
| March 7 & 8           | “The Healing Ministry” (Capernaum)<br>Sat: Sheri Clifton      Sun: Tom Deviney                             |
| March 14 & 15         | “Proclaiming the Kingdom” (The Mountains)<br>Sat: Thomas Johnson      Sun: Tom Deviney                     |
| March 21 & 22         | “Calming the Storm” (The Sea of Galilee)<br>Sat: Wynn Stenftenagel      Sun: Tom Deviney                   |
| March 28 & 29         | “Sinners, Outcasts, and the Poor” (Samaria)<br>Sat: Sheri Clifton      Sun: Tom Deviney                    |
| April 4 & 5           | “The Final Week” (Palm Sunday weekend)<br>Sat: Sheri Clifton      Sun: Tom Deviney                         |



## Lenten Midweek Communion Services

March 4–April 1

6:30 – 7:30 p.m. in the Worship Center

*Join us for Soup Suppers at 5:15 p.m. and then come to Worship!*

March 4 speaker: Ramona Hovey

March 11 speaker: TBD

## March 18 speaker: Teen Challenge

March 25 speaker: TBD

April 1 speaker: Randy Nettles

*For more information see the Bethany website, [www.bethany-umc.org](http://www.bethany-umc.org)*



# Lenten Soup Suppers

**Wednesdays, March 4 - April 1, 5:15—6:30 p.m.**

## In the Fellowship Hall

Enjoy this time of food and fellowship before attending the Wednesday Night Lenten Worship Service at 6:30 PM.

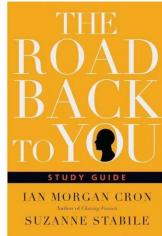
## *A Lenten Tradition of Hospitality at Bethany*

Soup provided by Sunday School classes, but feel free to bring a pot of your favorite to share as well, or just come eat & fellowship!





Please join us in our latest book study on **February 27:**



## The Road Back to You: An Enneagram Journey to Self-Discovery

**Ignorance is bliss—except in self-awareness.** What you don't know about yourself can hurt you and your relationships—and even keep you in the shallows with God. Do you want help figuring out who you are and why you're stuck in the same ruts? The Enneagram is an ancient personality typing system with an uncanny accuracy in describing how human beings are wired, both positively and negatively.

**Thursdays from 9:30-11:30am  
or 6:30-8:30pm in D211 (5 weeks)**

Childcare provided from 9:30am-**2pm** for \$7/child. Bethany Preschool Kids will be escorted by staff to childcare at noon. It's a perfect way to extend the preschool day.

Can't make the morning time? MOMs also meets Thursday nights from 6:30-8:30pm

Email Elizabeth to order the Book (\$15) and/or Study Guide (\$8)

**Contact for more information:** Elizabeth (elizabeth.nettles@bethany-umc.org)

**RSVP for childcare:** Christin (christin.smith@bethany-umc.org)



## **COUNSELOR'S CORNER** Compassionate Brains are Different

Compassion generally is concerned with understanding someone's situation, being present for them, loving them, and wishing for things to be different. Many studies have shown that being compassionate changes our brain. Having compassion stimulates the parts of the brain that can enhance cognitive networks and attention and increase openness and receptivity to new things. The physical changes that compassion creates in the body can increase resiliency and creativity, as well as lower our stress levels.

Because our brain's neural circuitry is malleable and can be rewired through neuroplasticity, one's tendency for compassion is never fixed. We all need to practice putting ourselves in someone else's shoes to reinforce the neural networks that allow us to "love thy neighbor as thyself" and "do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Experts have found that compassion can be trained. Being compassionate requires self-reflection and self-regulation. One of the best forms of training our brain is by meditation. Compassion meditations activate the insular cortex, which is associated with self-awareness and empathy, as well as the social emotions of fairness and collaboration.

Meditation stimulates regions of the brain operating in a state of harmony and integration, that harmony is reflected externally in the way we engage with the world. It manifests, as compassion towards ourselves, others, and our world.

Take a few minutes every day to sit quietly and systematically send loving and compassionate thoughts to:

- 1) Family and friends
- 2) Someone with whom you have tension or a conflict
- 3) Strangers around the world who are suffering
- 4) Self-compassion, forgiveness, and self-love to yourself.

Possibly you will consider this simple meditation practice for compassion. You can literally rewire your brain by engaging neural connections!

Lisa Blackwood MS MA LPC-S #19803  
LCDC#4065 EMDR Certified



# Missions



## Serving Under-Privileged Families in our Community

We will be preparing and delivering meals using the MLF food truck on these dates:

**Mondays, March 2 & 16**

**Friday, March 27**

*Needed: full-size bottles of SHAMPOO*

Drop-off bins are located around the church for donations.

**For information about volunteer opportunities, please visit:**

[www.bethany-umc.org/mobile-loaves-fishes](http://www.bethany-umc.org/mobile-loaves-fishes)

or to volunteer, contact Gayle Kneupper, [kneupper@yahoo.com](mailto:kneupper@yahoo.com)

## Feed My People

**Tuesday, March 10**

**5:00 AM**

**First UMC, 13th & Lavaca**



Bethany sponsors a breakfast each month to feed 300-400 downtown homeless. We purchase, prepare and serve a hot breakfast.

*If your group would like to sponsor a month or for information about volunteer opportunities, please visit:*

[www.bethany-umc.org/feed-my-people](http://www.bethany-umc.org/feed-my-people) or contact Debbie Childers [bdschilders@juno.com](mailto:bdschilders@juno.com)

I Live Here  
I Give Here

## Amplify Austin

Amplify Austin Day is 24 hours of giving in Central Texas

**6:00 pm March 5 - 6:00 pm March 6**

Several Bethany UMC affiliated organizations you may wish to consider supporting with donations through Amplify Austin are listed on our website with links:

[www.bethany-umc.org/amplify](http://www.bethany-umc.org/amplify)



## Mental Wellness Connect: Dementia Care

Bethany's Mental Wellness Team focus in February is Dementia Care. Stop by the Connection Corner on February 23 to discover dementia care resources at Bethany and in the Austin area.

Did you know? Over 5.8 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's dementia. In Texas, this disease is projected to increase 28% by 2025.

Dementia is the general term for over 40 diseases of the brain that affect memory, judgment, language, and the ability to perform everyday activities. Some people with dementia cannot control their emotions, and their personalities may change. The most common types are Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, frontotemporal disorders, and Lewy body dementia.

Unpaid family members make up the largest group providing care for persons living with these progressive brain diseases. Nearly half of dementia caregivers indicate that providing help is highly stressful. Bethany offers care, support, and hope through the House of Friends dementia respite program, the Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group, and caregiver education classes. *Savvy Caregiver*, a 6-class practical training series for dementia family caregivers, is currently being taught by Pastor Dave Lutz and Stephen Minister Cheryl Goad.

Susie Petersen [susie.petersen@bethany-umc.org](mailto:susie.petersen@bethany-umc.org)



## Life Recovery: New Season

**Starting March 1<sup>st</sup>!**

We're grateful for God's work in our Life Recovery community since we got started in October. Our next season will be March 1 – June 14.

If you or someone you know struggles with a hurtful coping strategy, habit, or addiction, join us for our informational kickoff Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, at 2:00 p.m. in Rm. D209-210. Healing and hope are possible!



## PRIMETIMERS UPCOMING EVENTS

**3/4—Chit, Chat & Chew:** Men's Breakfast, Wednesday, 8am at Jim's on Spicewood Springs/183

**3/6—Game Night:** Friday, 6:30–9:30pm in the Ministry Center. No reservations needed.

**3/8—Lunch in the Bethany Café:** Sunday after 11 am worship, \$7 per person. Reservations to LaVon, 512-465-2125 by Tuesday 2/4.

**3/19—Outing to Driftwood:** Thursday. Enjoy OPTIONAL WINE TASTING and dinner at Mandola's Trattoria Lisina. \$5 per person for the bus fuel. \$15 for wine tasting if desired. Cost of dinner not included. Reservations to Shirley @ 512-219-5842 by Monday, March 16. Bus leaves Bethany @ 3 pm and returns after dinner before 8 pm.

**Domino Play:** Wednesdays, 3-5 pm in the Ministry Center. Join us!

*Please be sure you are free before making your reservation.*



## 2020 Summer Trips

**Save \$50 - Register by March 1st**

**Mission by the Sea** (6th-12th grade) Palacios, TX Dates: May 31 - June 4, 2020

Cost: \$350; *pay only \$300 for registration and non-refundable \$100 payment by March 1st.*

**PURE SOUND Choir Tour** (6th-12th grade) Colorado Dates: June 18 - 25, 2020

Cost (approx.): \$450; *pay only \$400 for registration and non-refundable \$100 payment by March 1st.*

**El Salvador** (Must have completed 10th grade by trip dates) Dates: June 26 - July 3, 2020

Cost: \$1,375, *pay only \$1300 for registration and \$200 non-refundable deposit by March 1st.*

**Mountain T.O.P.** (Current 8<sup>th</sup> graders and High School) Dates: July 10-19, 2020

Cost: \$705; *pay only \$655 for registration and non-refundable payment by March 1st.*

**MIDDLE SCHOOL MYSTERY TRIP** (5th-8th grade) Dates: July 27 - 31. 2020

Cost: \$375; *pay only \$325 for registration and non-refundable payment by March 1st.*

**Learn more at <http://www.bethany-umc.org>**



### Interactive Ash Wednesday Experience

Wed, Feb 26 - 5:30-6:15pm (Cornerstone)

- for youth, children & their families
- hands-on prayer stations
- imposition of ashes.

## MYF

Sundays, 5:45 - 8:00

Snack Supper (cost \$3)

Worship:

*music, message, prayer, offering*

Small Groups

Games

**Bring your friends**

## Upcoming EVENTS

Mike Barnes speaks during MYF - March 29

Confirmation Reception & Worship - April 18

Youth Led Worship - April 18 & 19

Graduation Sunday - May 17

Find Event and Fundraising info online: [www.bethany-umc.org/ministries/student](http://www.bethany-umc.org/ministries/student)



## Children's Sabbath - February 22 & 23

**Join us at any of the worship services as we celebrate the children of Bethany!**

Here are some details for parents:

Children should go to services and sit with you.

We are not having regular Sunday School classes - care is available in the Good News Theater (D224) for Kinder to 5th Grade and D126 for preschool. **Care is ONLY for children whose parents are attending Adult Sunday School classes.**

Questions: Contact Jen Seibel at [jen.seibel@bethany-umc.org](mailto:jen.seibel@bethany-umc.org)

## Interactive Ash Wednesday Experience

**Wednesday, February 26**

**5:30pm - 6:15pm  
(Cornerstone)**

Come and experience Ash Wednesday in an interactive way. Geared towards children, youth, and their families (but open to anyone), this experience will include hands-on prayer stations and the imposition of ashes.



Questions: Contact Jessica Petersen at [jessica.petersen@bethany-umc.org](mailto:jessica.petersen@bethany-umc.org)

# The Epistle

## Weekly Church Newsletter

The Epistle is published bi-weekly by Bethany United Methodist Church, 10010 Anderson Mill Rd., Austin, TX 78750



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### Join Us For Worship

**Saturday Worship** 5:00 p.m.

**Sunday Worship** 8:15, 9:30 & 11:00 a.m.

**Sunday Chapel Communion Service**

9:30 a.m.

**Sunday School** 9:30 & 11:00 a.m.

**Sunday Youth Worship** 5:30 p.m.

**Mid-Week Worship**

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

*More worship details inside on p.3*



*Next Epistle deadline: February 25 for  
the March 8 publication.*

*If you would like to subscribe to receive this bi-weekly newsletter by mail or email, contact the church office at 512-258-6017.*

## Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper

**February 25, 2020**

**5:30 – 7:30 PM**

**Fellowship Hall**



Please join us for delicious pancakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, and juice for Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper. There will be games, trivia, prizes, a pancake-eating contest\*, and a pancake-themed talent show\*!

Donations are appreciated to offset Hospitality costs.

**NO Wednesday night meal on February 26<sup>th</sup>.**

\* - Required pre-registration at <https://tinyurl.com/fattuesday2020>