

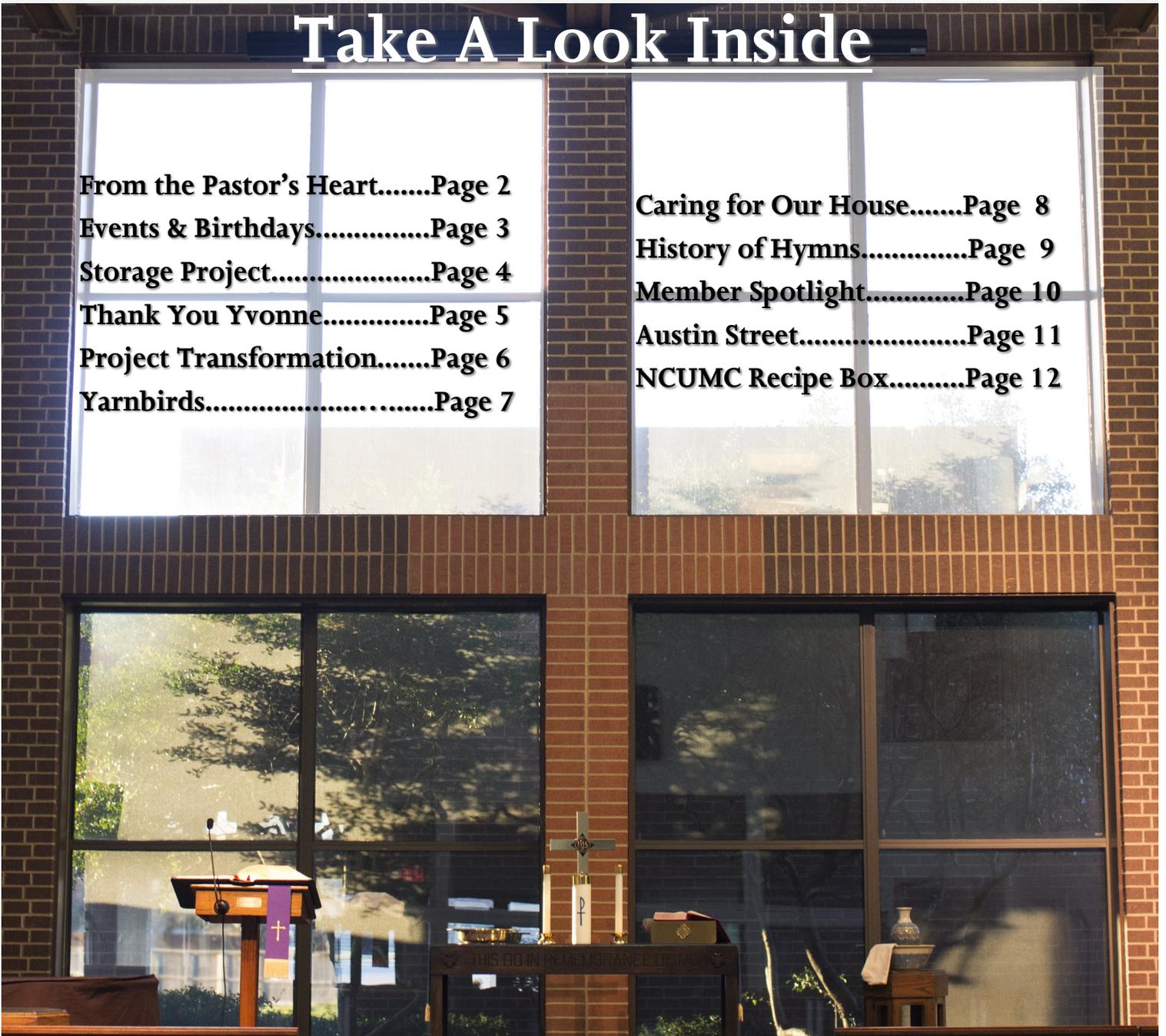


the **New Covenant** *Window*

Take A Look Inside

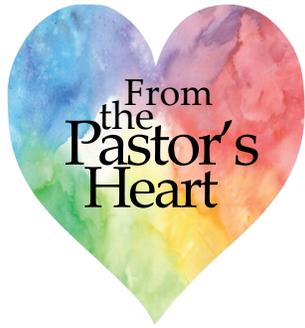
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Sharing God through love and service

Ask the Pastor, Again



Last month I promised to answer the other question that has made its way into the “Ask the Pastor” box: Why do you want to be a pastor? What a question! How long have you got? How much space am I allowed? The answer is both complex and at the same time very simple.

I first felt myself called to ordained ministry by the time I was 9 years old. Since I had never seen a woman in the pulpit, I didn't really process that this was even an option for me, more of a (almost cruel) joke. I fantasized about being a pastor. By age 12 I had memorized the entire long Communion liturgy and would recite it under my breath with the pastor. That year I asked for a Methodist Hymnal for my birthday...not just for the music but especially for the liturgy. As a teenager, I wanted little more than I wanted to be at church and was there pretty much whenever the doors were open.

It sounds almost like a fantasy world. But even as a youngster I knew that the church was filled with flawed people. There was the third grade Sunday school teacher who told us that Jesus was sitting in an empty chair and would ‘get us’ if we misbehaved. Later I learned that she could use language that would make a sailor blush. And in high school, I was the new kid and many of the girls (both at school and church) were not overly nice to me. It didn't matter. This was where I belonged...until I didn't. When I left for college, I left the church as well complete with lots of anger. My journey back is a long and convoluted story for another time.

There is a joke that ‘church people’ think that a pastor's life is easy, filled with reading the bible and praying all day to be interrupted by the occasional hospital or home visit. The only time a pastor really works is believed to be on Sunday. What good Christian wouldn't want to spend all day every day reading the bible and praying? Perhaps surprising, a fair number of folks do seem to believe that's pretty much all that I do! After spending a day with me during the week, a teenager once commented, “I thought you only worked on Sunday. Who knew that you do so many different things!” Don't you just love how kids are so spontaneous and honest?

There was a time when I would have tried to answer “why do you want to be a pastor?” with examples of holy moments in worship and during pastoral care. There have been so many such moments...some joyful and some painful. I have baptized babies, teenagers and adults. One elderly gentleman confessed to me that, although he had been considered a church member for 50+ years, he had never been baptized. His baptism was scheduled, but his military unit shipped out early and he missed it. What a joyful day we had when he was baptized. On two occasions I have baptized babies moments after birth...one right before and the other right after they died. We can talk theology if you want, but loving care for parents that offered hope in the midst of hopelessness were holy moments. I've led Confirmation classes and Confirmed young people into the life of the church. These have all been joyful. I've married couples as they've professed their love for one another...most recently at the wedding of my best friend's daughter. I've officiated at funerals and sat with the dying. I once curled up on the bed with a church member and her dying mother as we sang hymns. More than once, I've been the last person someone has seen. And more times than I can now count, I have stood with family as a loved one died. I've given the order numerous times for life support to be turned off so that a family member didn't have to do it.

I have been honored and humbled to be present for the most joyful and most painful moments in peoples' lives...both places where I've glimpsed the best and the worst in people. Most weddings and baptisms are joyful...but I've known my share of bridezillas and, let's call them highly stressed, parents. I've sat with the dying where nothing but love filled the room. And I've managed intoxicated children as elderly parents died. I once broke up a fist fight between siblings literally over the top of their dying mother. I've been present when loving grandparents were told that their grandson had been murdered. And I've told a 10-year-old (whose father had died two months before) that his mother had lost her battle with cancer and would not be coming home because there was no one else to do it.

Anyone would want to be a part of the joyful, fun stuff. But why would anyone “want” the rough, painful stuff? The answer is: no one really does. To be a pastor is not a job that one chooses. Rather God chooses you. Some go easily; still others kicking and screaming; while others never go at all. I did a little kicking and screaming. My life was well set when God came calling again. I was finishing my training as a therapist and having great success. While still telling God, “no way,” I became the Clinical Director at a non-profit agency and things just got better. I was well on my way to being the Executive Director. My path was set. I was real clear with God: I was ready years ago and you didn't make a way. My life is set now. Go away and leave me alone. God was equally clear with me: Now is the time. Not then. Now.

I started seminary to get God off my back. Really. I had no intentions of changing my life. After the Special General Conference, again God became very clear with me: Now. This is why now. So the answer to “why do you want to be a pastor?” is both complex and simple. Many people “want” the fun and joyful parts of being a pastor. As for the rest, if God has not called, let it go. The fun and joyful times won't be enough to carry you through the pain and even heartbreak that is part of this life. But if you *are* called, there is no better life.

Blessings,
Pastor Dana

August

August 1 10:00 am - 12:00 pm 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Sharing Life Stuffing Backpacks Fellowship & Games
August 7 6:15 pm - 7:15 pm 7:15 pm - 8:15 pm	Chorale Practice Resumes Choir Practice Resumes
August 8 10:00 am - 12:00 pm 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Sharing Life Stuffing Backpacks Fellowship & Games
August 15 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Fellowship & Games
August 18 Both Services	Promotion Sunday Blessing of the Backpacks
August 21 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm	Ewing House (Celebration Class)
August 22 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Fellowship & Games
August 25	Newsletter Articles Due
August 29 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Fellowship & Games

Upcoming Events

at New Covenant UMC



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 2:** Elaine Griffin
- 3:** Karen Termin
- 4:** Gene Moore
- 6:** Jeff Browning
Bill Gilbert
David Young
- 10:** Jean Miller
- 14:** Ruben Castillo
- 18:** Annah Beth Hardin
- 22:** Ernestine Jabati
- 25:** Doug Crownover
- 28:** Mike Payne
- 30:** Kerri Embrey
Misty Ramsey
- 31:** Mike Embrey
Giovanna Mattox

Pray It Forward!

Physical meetings will be returning the first week of September.

Please send all prayer requests & celebrations to

Cindy Wolfe via email: maytag9713@sbcglobal.net or text: 214-315-9992.

You can also see Linda Easton or Cindy Wolfe during services.

1 Peter 4:8

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.”

NEW COVENANT STORAGE PROJECT!

By Laura May

This summer we began reorganizing the storage spaces at New Covenant. It started with the children's items. Throughout the garage sale and as we began planning for VBS we found children's supplies scattered throughout a total of 9 closets and 6 classrooms. The children's team has been diligently working on re-organizing and culling these supplies over the past two months so that they are contained within only the classrooms used for children plus two of the downstairs hallway closets. Huge thank you goes out to Bridget Jagiel and Yvonne Taylor who found a way to make all of the sporting equipment fit in just one closet! We now have a game closet and sports equipment closet downstairs, the kids were so excited to see the kickball equipment again! Mark Young, inspired by his memories of kickball at church, decided to play kickball with the VBS kids. They had a blast! The upstairs classrooms were reorganized and used throughout VBS as well. All of the crafting supplies are now located in the Art and Science room upstairs with a few essentials being stored in the downstairs Sunday school room. The younger nursery room now boasts **two Pack-&-Plays** which can be found under the sink (it works I promise!). Puppets have been brought out of retirement and are currently being loved during children's church. We have also talked to the Boy Scouts about moving all of their items back to the designated room. All of this work has freed up a ton of space for the other groups in the church to use.

The hope for this project is that we can embrace the rich history of the church, welcome new members with these amazing memories and make space to keep adding to the story of New Covenant. The ultimate goal of the project is for closets and storage spaces throughout the church to be thoughtfully assigned (by committee) to specific groups. Giving each closet a specific purpose will provide a unified system of storage so that items are easily accessible by anyone who needs them; this will also cut back on duplicate purchases of materials and unnecessary storage of items. Going forward, rather than take space from any group to make room for others, we hope to add space for everyone by storing items strategically. We will continue the project over the next few months so be on the lookout for special work days on the church calendar! Anyone who wishes to help with the project in any capacity is encouraged to email myself or Karen Crownover.

Yvonne Taylor has served among us since November. While we are sad to see her go, we also know that God has great plans for her future ministry!

Thank
you





Project Transformation – New Covenant UMC’s Week of Reading

By John Elfers

“Children – College students – Churches. This is a win-win-win formula, but relationships are at the heart of everything we do. It is through relationships that lives are transformed.”

Last month I addressed the college student component and New Covenant’s willingness and ongoing commitment to serve dinner to college students in Project Transformation housed at SMU. This month I will discuss the day to day experience of children (the one on one reading). Ten volunteers from New Covenant participated in this at Pleasant Mound United Methodist Church from June 24th to 27th. Our group arrived at Pleasant Mound between 9:15 and 9:30 each morning. The volunteer coordinator, Alexandra, and the reading coordinator, Brittany, greeted us as we arrived and provided an orientation to all of us on our first day this year. Both Alexandra and Brittany were very thorough in providing suggestions on interacting with the children and went over the rules before the children start. In the first weeks of the summer each child is tested and assigned a reading level so that the child can pick books that are color coded at his or her level.

We had three groups of children to read with in this order each morning: 3rd-4th grade, fifth grade, and first grade going into second grade for about 30 minutes each. The groups gave themselves group names: Fortnight, Starbucks, and Avengers. As we read individually with our children, we quickly became aware of different personalities and different situations at home. Many of the first grade children were struggling with reading and some were starting to exhibit anxiety and low self-esteem because of this. Others were reading well, but did not seem to have the comprehension skills. There were a few who were reading beyond their grade level.

When the elementary school age groups are not reading, they have craft activities or physical activities (outside when it is not too hot). They start their day with a short devotional or Bible time. The program interns also have a middle school age group who have various activities and a high school age group. Various high school kids helped out with the one on one reading as needed. The program provides breakfast and lunch for the participants, although the kids may skip the breakfast if they arrive later. The program runs Mondays through Thursdays from 8:30 am to about 3:30 pm. The reading component which we participate in runs from 10:00 to noon. Project Transformation provides a much needed boost to these kids by giving them confidence with reading for the upcoming school year.

All of us enjoyed interacting with the kids each day and getting to know them over the week. It was especially nice when some of us would get the same child for a few days. The child’s face lights up when they see their reading partner. Much thanks and appreciation to those who cleared their schedules for one or more days to be a part of this experience. I encourage everyone to keep reading with Project Transformation kids on their radar for next year, if you are able.

Songs of the Yarnbirds

By Linda Dunn

The Yarnbirds began in 2015 when a small group of NCUMC members met to crochet and knit. We couldn't have imagined what God had in store for us. Our first project was the crocheted shawls for the sanctuary that are used year round. Soon after, we realized our crochet skills varied and we needed something to challenge us to increase our abilities. That prompted a foray into the world of flower granny squares, where we learned more stitches and techniques. By the way, those squares finally ended us in a retirement shawl for Pastor Reid. We continued meeting and adding additional items to our list of items to crochet.

The Yarnbirds began selling pumpkin hats at The Pumpkin Patch in 2016 and continues to expand its selection of items and increase its contribution to NCUMC's Missions. It took awhile, but God steered our course. We received a request to donate something to Austin Street Center for the 25th anniversary of NCUMC's service. We realized that we did not have enough manpower to crochet anything in large numbers due to time and budget constraints. Fleece was the answer. We began by cutting and sewing fleece into pull-on hats with rows of crochet at the bottom – it was fast and didn't take too much yarn. The crochet hooks were flying and we were blessed to be able to donate 108 hats. We then began cutting fleece for lapghans, wraps, afghans and baby/kids' blankets and adding crocheted borders – there was no stopping us. This enabled us to reach out to more people than we could have imagined, while staying within our budget. We have been blessed by the generous donations of yarn by our church members and for that we are very grateful.

In addition to providing crocheted items to members and their friends and families, we have been blessed to be able to donate the following:

The Waterford: Lapghans

Austin Street Center: Hats and scarves

Parkland and Baylor Hospitals: Chemo hats

Genesis Women's Center Outreach: Wraps and Kids' blankets

Our current members are: Diane Duckworth, Marcia Matus, Maggie Miller, Bridget Jagiel, Susan Kovan and Linda Dunn.

Our newest projects include crocheted symbols for the Advent tree and pocket prayers, but we could use some help. **FREE CROCHET LESSONS!**



November 16

8:00 am - 12:00 pm

- ◆ Trimming hedges around building
- ◆ Caulking around windows in the Educational Building
- ◆ Spraying poison ivy around campus
- ◆ Removing weeds and grass from playground
- ◆ Raising the canopy of trees (Minimum 6' clearance) north side of parking lot
- ◆ Cleaning stains on carpet throughout the church

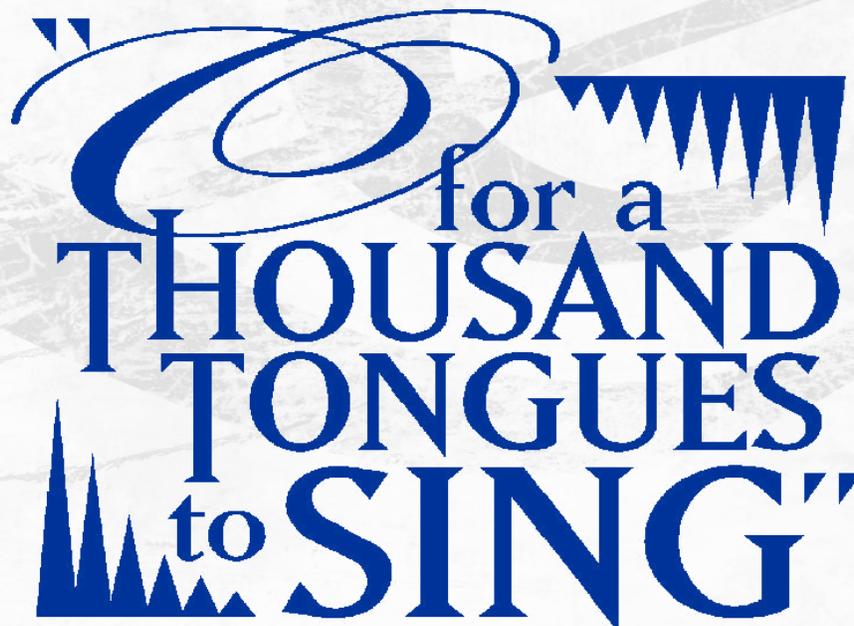


This is only a partial list of the many opportunities to care for our house. If you see something that needs to be done, feel free to complete the task at anytime. Just let the Trustee's know what you have done so they can remove it from their to-do list.

Thank you for your service & commitment
to keeping our house beautiful!

History of Hymns

By Sarah Reed



O For a THOUSAND TONGUES to SING

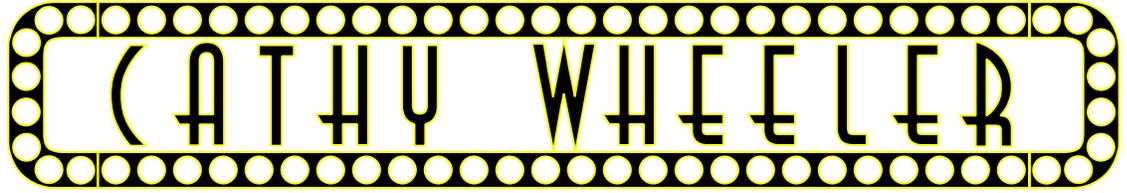
John and Charles Wesley, while students at Oxford University, formed a “Holy Club” due to their dissatisfaction with the “spiritual lethargy” at the school. As a result of the methodical ways they lived and studied, they were jokingly referred to as “Methodists”.

Upon graduation, the Anglican church sent the brothers to America to stabilize the religious climate of the Georgia Colonies and to evangelize the Indians. This trip was the first time that the brothers met the German Moravians and experienced their faith and enthusiastic hymn singing.

At home in England they again experienced the joyful Moravian worship and singing at Aldersgate. In May 1738, the brothers had their “heartwarming” experience in which they realized a new joy and enthusiasm for sharing their faith. Both John and Charles traveled tirelessly across Great Britain on horseback conducting approximately 40,000 worship services. Charles alone is estimated to have written text to over 6500 hymns without a day or experience passing that he did not put pen to paper. “O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing” was written in 1749 on the anniversary of his Aldersgate conversion experience. It is said to have been inspired by a Moravian leader who exclaimed, “Had I a thousand tongues, I would praise Christ Jesus with all of them”. The hymn originally had nineteen stanzas and was originally titled “For the Anniversary of One’s Conversion”. Most of the verses, no longer used, dealt personally with Wesley’s own conversion experience.

Beginning with a 1767 hymnbook, the seventh stanza was made the first, and when John Wesley compiled his “Collection of Hymns” in 1780, he chose this for the first hymn in the book. Congregations today usually sing verses seven, eight, nine and ten of Wesley’s original, which we know today as “O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing”.

As we consider what this hymn means to each one of us personally,
I encourage you to think about the words of the Moravian leader -
“If I had a thousand tongues, I would praise Christ Jesus with all of them!”



By Kerri Embrey

Member Spotlight

I often wonder what draws people into a new church or a church at all and the answers vary. They vary from relocation to they just need a fresh start. The one constant thing that I have found that keeps people in a church are the people. The size of the church is irrelevant; it really is just who is inside that makes it what it is. For more than eighteen years, when you walk through the doors of the sanctuary at New Covenant, the piano playing aficionado is Cathy Wheeler.

Cathy grew up at Owenwood United Methodist Church and was playing the piano there until her adventure at New Covenant began around 2001. Her love for music came at a very young age. She started in the basement of St. Luke's with a rather determined piano teacher. She learned to play songs like "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and thanks to her hard work and a teacher with high expectations, she perfected it and it has become one of her favorite hymns. She has not quit playing since.

Cathy, and her family, James, Lesley and Michael, moved to Sunnyvale and although they loved Owenwood, the distance from their new home prompted Cathy to seek out another church home as well as a new possible opportunity as a pianist. She contacted the church office one day and spoke with then secretary, Jean Hanz, about possibly filling in when the regular pianist may be out. She was also playing at First Methodist Terrell as well as working as the music teacher and chapel leader at Christian Childhood Development Center in Lake Highlands.

Before she knew it, New Covenant had a vacancy and as most things come full circle, this did too. She came in for an interview and realized she was interviewing with Cindy Waldrop, a former high school classmate. Needless to say, we know that Cathy got the job and we have been blessed with her talent ever since. Early service was the original arrangement but as things would turn out, she began playing for both services and then added the chorale and choir accompaniment to her schedule.

If you have ever seen Cathy in action, she plays the piano as enthusiastically as she does anything else. The joy that exudes while she is playing the piano, leading the sacred circle, accompanying cantata's and the list goes on, is a site to see and becomes mesmerizing because she does it all so effortlessly. Psalm 95:2 says, "Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!" Putting people in our path that will help us, challenge us and bless us and that is what keeps people in this church, the people. This person whose talents extend to writing children's books and writing her own arrangements. This person that plays any piano like it is a Steinway and keeps novice vocalists in the right tempo even when some of us do not even know how to count or read music. This person who sits on the floor with the little ones and laughs and tells funny stories and then turns around and holds the hands of the adults to pray with them. This person who falls off the piano bench during a service because someone put too much polish on it, yet just kept going all the while her husband and mom were laughing too hard to help her up. No, this was not at New Covenant but I have to believe we might all have joined in the laughter as she hit the pedals on the way off. This person who has taught hundreds, if not thousands, of people to get out of their comfort zone and just play and sing and make a joyful noise. This person whose favorite thing to do is accompany people because that is where her joy comes from. She has even taught her incredibly talented and sweet two-year-old granddaughter to play the piano and sing even before she was potty trained.

What draws people in and what keeps them in a church are the people!

What a joy it is to get to experience the love of Christ that Cathy so joyfully shares with us at New Covenant.

Proverbs 31:25 She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future.

Missionary UPDATE



Austin Street

By Kathy Rogers

In the early hours of Sunday, June 30, New Covenant once again brought and served breakfast to the homeless folks who spent the night in Dallas' Austin Street Shelter. With home-baked muffins (thanks to Linda Easton and Karen Crownover),

cereal, milk and fruit in hand, the seven church members arrived at the shelter before 5:30, and by 6:00, after giving God thanks for this meal, began serving 374 people.

Three members from St. Stephens UMC (bringing even more food) joined us. As usual, the gratitude was pervasive; we had too many "Thank you's" to count. And as always, it was an enormously rewarding experience.

When is our next breakfast at Austin Street scheduled, you ask? That would be September 30, 2019, which gives you plenty of time to decide to join us for this traditional mission of our church.

Hope to see you there.



Friends & family welcome

Be a part of our new
New Covenant United Methodist
Church directory!

We encourage you to invite
loved ones to join your
photography session

Photography dates
September 20-21, 2019

Lifetouch.

Both Ends

By Jim Handy

God is known to give, and to take away.

The giving we call a blessing.

The taking away is loss... a challenge... a learning opportunity.

When an experience includes both a blessing and a challenge.

We turn to God with our gratitude and our displeasure.

A baby is born and grows to be a well-loved individual who dies.

A relationship that blossoms, then coasts, then crumbles in sadness.

Thank You, God, for Your grace. What is my lesson here, Lord?

You are all loving. You are all teaching. Our tasks here are to love and to learn

We reach each through You.

Thank You deeply for both ends of the spectrum.

Chicken Roll-Ups

From the kitchen of Debbie Willis

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 can mushroom soup
- 1 cup milk
- 1-10 oz can of white meat chicken or 1 lb of cooked, diced chicken
- 10 oz frozen chopped broccoli (thawed and drained)
- 1 cup grated cheese
- 1 can French onions
- 1 tomato
- 8-10 fajita size tortillas

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 350
- Combine soup and milk in a small mixing bowl and set aside.
- Combine broccoli, chicken, 1/2 cup cheese, 1/2 can onions and 3/4 cup of the soup mixture in a larger mixing bowl.
- Divide equally between tortillas and roll.
- Place them in a greased 9x11 baking pan, seam side down. Add tomatoes to soup, then pour the remaining soup mixture over the tortillas.
- Cover and bake for 30 - 35 minutes.
- Sprinkle with remaining cheese and serve.

