



A Spiritual Oasis Committed to Christ,

November 2022

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church

# Connections

## Newsletter

### A Conversation with Chuck & Helen Trahan

Q: When was your first day at CPFUMC and what do you remember about it?

A: October 24, 2021. It was the friendly welcoming people.

Q: Tell us about what drew you to CPFUMC.

A: We were looking for a new church home.



Q: In what city did you grow up? Where do you live now?

A: Helen was an Air Force brat born in Okinawa but she grew up all over. Chuck was born in Galveston, TX. We currently live in Leander.

Q: What church did you come to CPFUMC from?

MEMBERS continued on p. ?

### PUMPKIN PATCH 2022 – AN AMAZING SUCCESS!

*Thanks so much for all your hard work to make the Pumpkin Patch such a huge success! It takes a whole army of people to make it all work, doesn't it? A lot of tireless workers – getting the patch ready, unloading pumpkins, selling pumpkins, counting the proceeds – what a tremendous effort it all was!*

*This year we sold over \$9200 worth of pumpkins. How amazing! Maybe you'd like to know more about the organization we get our pumpkins from. Here's their story:*

Under a blue sky in Farmington, New Mexico, hope grows on a vine. Richard Hamby, Pumpkin Farmer, surveys the fields: "There's probably 100 loads of pumpkins in here. We grow 20 different varieties and they range in size from 5 pounds to 40 or 50 pounds."

Richard Hamby started Pumpkin Patch Fundraisers in 1974. Hamby says, "We'll load

**PUMPKIN PATCH continued on p. 4**

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

<u>BE LIGHT YOUTH NEWS</u>	p. 2
<u>Midwinter Retreat</u>	p. 3
<u>Letter from Trustees</u>	p. 4
<u>2023 Stewardship Campaign</u>	p. 5
<u>Church Finances</u>	p. 6
<u>Feed the Youth!</u>	p. 7
<u>Church Contacts</u>	p. 7
<u>This Month's Calendar</u>	p. 8

# BE LIGHT YOUTH - Check it out!

Fall Schedule (so far- jobs will be added as we receive them)

## November

Sun 11/6 and 13 **at noon** work on creating items to sell at **Christmas Tea and Treats** first weekend in December

SATURDAY 11/12 *Oh What a Circus* musical to cheer for Jozi - 7pm meet for dinner at 5:30pm

Sun 11/20 **at noon** Hanging of the Greens AND workday at Helen's 1:30-3:30pm

**Saturday 11/26 Holiday Inn** at the Georgetown Palace theatre plus dinner with a church member ; Currently have 4 YOUTH tickets donated; (accompanying adults/parents must purchase tickets for \$36) Youth attending so far: Abby, Audrey, Mady and ??

TUESDAY November 29 - set up SANTA'S SHOP FOR MOM And POP - need people to come after work that evening to set up the shopping space for the preschoolers time to TBD

## December

SATURDAY 12/3 **Christmas TEA and TREATS from 10-noon** **BE LIGHT YOUTH 8:30-12:30 (setup and clean up)** fundraiser for **Methodist Roots England 2024**

Sun 12/4 wrap gifts from the Santa's Shop for Mom and Pop

Sun 12/ 11 Christmas party after worship

Sun 12/18 deliver Christmas gifts to nursing homes

Sun 12/25 Christmas Day - no YOUTH

There will be work/play days scheduled over the break TBD.

## January

Sun 1/1 NO YOUTH= Happy New Year

Sun 1/8 confirmation resumes

## MIDWINTER RETREAT FRIDAY 1/13-SUNDAY 1/15 at a ranch in New Braunfels (no school on Monday)

(Look for separate email with specifics coming soon)

Thank you to each of the parents and adults volunteers who have stepped up to be Safe Gatherings Compliant. It is a **vital** aspect to the thriving of our YOUTH ministry and the life of the church. Still planning to but haven't yet - here's the link: <https://riotexas.org/safesteps> I encourage ALL PARENTS to become *Trusted con Confianza* (one who has completed the three step process) as another layer of accountability for all the church happenings for all vulnerable humans.

## CONFIRMATION classes + MUSIC JAM sessions + Tacos Sundays during SS hour 9:45-10:30am

November 6 and 20- confirmation

November 13 and 27 - drumming circle - we have not yet determined if they will play on Christmas Eve as we really have had few practices. We can make that determination next week between what we practice and the anxiety of the YOUTH too. I am hoping to keep it light and fun.

December 4 confirmation

December 11 and 18 will be drumming circle especially if we do decide to drum on Christmas Eve.

Dec 25/Jan 1 - no SS or YOUTH - we will have work days for those wanting to go to England over the break

Jan 8 resume Confirmation

Jan 13-15 District wide Midwinter retreat for YOUTH in New Braunfels/ No SS at CPFUMC

Jan 22 Confirmation

Jan 29 NO Youth at Church - United Women in Faith conference for the young women/ No SS at CPFUMC

Peace,  
Pastor Suzette

## BE LIGHT YOUTH

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church

It's official! The Youth Midwinter Retreat is back!

Take a breath and spend some time reconnecting with God and each other this January.

Youth from Methodist churches across the Austin area will spend Friday night through Sunday morning in the beautiful Texas hill country at the T bar M campground in New Braunfels, TX as we gather for an awesome weekend full of worship, fellowship, and fun.

- **What:** Capital District Youth Midwinter Retreat

- **When:** Jan. 13 (7pm) through Jan. 15 (10:30am)

- **Where:** T Bar M Camps and Retreats in New Braunfels, TX

- **Cost:** \$175/person (partial scholarships are available)

Youth sign up [HERE](#).

Adult chaperones sign up [HERE](#).

Please submit registration fee (\$175/pp) to CPFUMC website: <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z312/campaign/C-11Y2Q> . You can pay via check (please put "Youth Retreat" and youth's name on the memo line).

Theme: Made for More.

The theme will touch on how God sees us vs. what the world sees, our purpose in life to love God and love others vs. the world's definition of success, and how God created us for an intimate relationship with him.

### Tentative Schedule:

Friday, January 13

7pm Check-In

8pm Group Games & Orientation

9pm Worship

10pm Journaling / Reflection Time

10:15pm Snacks/Free Time

11pm Lights Out

Saturday, January 14

7am Wake up

8am Breakfast & Adult Meeting

9am Worship

10am Journaling / Reflection Time

10:30 Small Group Activities

12:30pm Lunch

(Saturday, continued)

1:30pm Small Group Activities

3:30pm Showers & Games

5:45pm Group Picture

6pm Dinner

7pm Worship

8pm Journaling / Reflection Time

8:30pm S'mores & games

11pm Lights Out

Sunday, January 15

7am Wake Up & Pack

8am Breakfast

9am Clean Up

9:30am Worship

10:30am Dismissal



## A Message From the Trustees

*Our fall workday was October 1st, 2022 and it was a resounding success. Many of you came out to see what you could help with and I am happy to report that all the items we had on the list were taking care of. In addition, we had many people helping to make preparations to receive the Pumpkins. All of these things contribute to making all the activities of the church a success. I want to just take a moment here to thank everyone that came out to help and let them know that all your efforts are well appreciated not only by me, but the other trustees and the congregation at large. Thanks again and God bless.*

*Sergio Longoria, Chair of Trustees.*

### **PUMPKIN PATCH from p. 1**

probably somewhere between a million-six and two million individual pumpkins during this season.”

This farmer’s crop never makes it to the market. Instead, the pumpkins are sent to churches around the U.S. to raise money for mission projects. Hamby continues, “We’ve got a church in San Antonio, Texas that’s actually built a Habitat from nothing but the receipts from the pumpkin patch.”

From Texas to Tennessee and beyond, churches benefit from the pumpkin partnership. Jill Vogle, a member of Fellowship UMC in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, says, “Not only does it let the youth get more involved in the church, it brings the community in too, and it’s just a really good outreach fundraiser for them to have.”

Richard operates on good faith. He ships millions of dollars worth of pumpkins to 48 states. Churches are expected to give a percentage back for each pumpkin they sell.

“It’s sort of a fortuitous accident, I never thought it would grow this big but we’re almost at 1000 locations and the churches themselves net over three million dollars a year for their projects which range from ski trips to Habitat projects.” It takes six weeks to harvest the pumpkins every fall...but the yield lasts for years.

Pumpkin Patch Fundraisers began in 1974 in North Carolina with 3 acres of pumpkins and a partnership with one church. “We agreed to let the church sell the pumpkins and they would share the proceeds. There was no contract, no legal proceedings...just a handshake and trust in each other,” according to Richard and Janice Hamby, who have been growing pumpkins and adding partners ever since.

While it is unusual in the business world, this relationship of trust has been very effective throughout the years. In fact, that first church, Centenary United Methodist Church, is still selling pumpkins today.

After being hit by Hurricane Hugo, they moved their farming operations to the Navajo Indian Reservation in Farmington, NM. In cooperation with the Navajo Nation, 1,200 acres or approximately 2 square miles of pumpkins are grown, and over 700 Native Americans are employed during the harvest months of September and October. They also have a full-time off-season New Mexico staff that is comprised of entirely Native Americans.

Since 1974, this pumpkin patch family has grown to over 1,000 organizations covering the Continental US, representing 25 denominations of churches and youth groups, scouts, schools, fraternal organizations, habitat groups, and other civic organizations.

## 2023 Stewardship Campaign

Our 2023 stewardship campaign starts on Sunday, November 6, 2022. This is a time when we ask you to think about what the Church means to you, and how you can help it be a blessing to you, our community and beyond.

Cedar Park First UMC continues to thrive and serve through challenging times due to your faithful support. During this past year Church attendance has steadily grown. Our mission giving this year looks like it will set a Church record. That giving helps Hill Country Community Ministries, Ukrainian refugees locally and through the United Methodist Committee on Relief, a Rwandan widow and other Church missions. Our Youth have served on mission trips and completed an amazing, and challenging, trip to the Holy Land.

There are many ways you can support the Church. You can attend worship, participate in adult education, volunteer with the youth and with the membership care and outreach committee and of course give financially. Pledging to give, for those who feel able, is very important to the Church. A pledge is just an estimate of what you can reasonably, faithfully expect to give for the coming year. It is not a contract and you can change it if needed.

In 2022 our pledges were 15% below the prior year. As a result the Church Council had a challenge budgeting for 2022. We budgeted our expenses very conservatively and hoped for other giving. Overall the 2022 budget grew by only 1.5% even though we knew we had to increase some line items due to expected inflation. And we have experienced increased costs for insurance, utilities, building maintenance and other costs. In 2022 we also experienced some unexpected costs, like having to replace a heating/air conditioning unit in the Multi-ministries Building, at a cost of almost \$10,000.

By pledging you help the Church better plan its ministries for 2023, you support our pastors, you help us maintain our renovated sanctuary and you support our children and youth programs. Soon you will receive a letter including a pledge card and on November 6<sup>th</sup> you will also have an opportunity to pick up a pledge card at both worship services. We ask you to prayerfully consider completing a pledge card. You can mail it back to the church, or you can turn it in during worship on Commitment Sunday, November 20, 2022. We ask that you also consider an additional gift for this year, to help us address a deficit in our current year finances.

We have been blessed at Cedar Park First UMC and we are called to be a blessing to others. We hope and pray that you think, and then act, on how you can help us continue to be that blessing.

**MEMBERS from p. 1**

A: We both came from the Catholic church and have not attended in years.

Q: Tell us about your family.

A: We have been married for 19 years. We have six kids between us and nine grandchildren. Helen and Chuck each have two sons and a daughter. All our children live here except Helen's oldest moved to Colorado this year (with her grandson) and Chuck's youngest lives in Los Alamos (with his grandsons).

Q: Do you have any pets?

A: Dakota is a Golden Doodle and a very spoiled rotten dog!

Q: What do you like to do in your spare time? Or what takes up a lot of your time?

A: What spare time? Lots of different stuff and whatever mischief we can get into.

Q: Do you have a particular hobby? Is there one you want to learn?

A: Helen is a crafty person and likes to do mostly holiday things (wreaths, garlands, any type of Christmas floral), big Easter egg displays, signs and magnets. Helen also loves to entertain. Chuck's hobby is his phone and computer.

Q: What's your favorite restaurant or favorite meal?

A: Mexican food.

Q: Where is your favorite vacation locale?

A: We haven't found it yet.

Q: I'd rather do anything besides

A: Clean house.

## Church Finance Report

The Church's operating fund status through September 30, 2022 is summarized below.

September's expenses, and expenses for the year, are running below our budgeted estimates. However, September income and income for the year are also running below our budgeted estimates. As a result we have a deficit for the year through September. The Church continues to have adequate cash reserves to meet its financial obligations.

### Financial status through September 30, 2022

Total Income:	\$ 194,105.73
Total expenses:	<u>\$ 200,086.30</u>
Net Income/deficit:	-\$ 5,980.57

# YOUTH MEALS NEEDED!

## PLEASE FEED the BE LIGHT YOUTH

Food is a crucial aspect of YOUTH ministry. Please consider sponsoring or bringing lunch for

**TEN** BE LIGHT YOUTH for their Youth Gatherings after church.



Super simple suggestions:

- Spaghetti
- sandwich fixings (bread, meat/cheese, PB&J) couple bags of chips, fresh fruit
- basic tacos
- salad with a protein
- chicken nuggets and veggies sticks
- hamburgers
- soup and bread
- cheese/crackers/meats/grapes tray
- a casserole (please provide a vegetarian option)
- pancakes or breakfast tacos
- store bought item we can cook in the oven – family size lasagna for example
- gift card/cash for Subway or Taco Bell or HEB.

**Dessert is really optional and should be small as the YOUTH only want a bit of a treat.**

Please sign up to provide a meal! A sign-up sheet is available in the church lobby.

**Thank You for loving the BE LIGHT YOUTH!**

## Church Contacts

Find us online at [cpfumc.org](http://cpfumc.org)  
or call the church Tues-Thurs between 9 and 2 at (512) 335-9540

Want to contact a Church Leader or submit something for a future Newsletter?

Pastor Peter Castles  
Assoc. Pastor/Youth Dir. Suzette Thorpe Johnson  
Church Council Chair Carolyn Smith  
Music Director/Pianist Jodi Blount  
Newsletter Editor Jill Lundstrom

[peter@cpfumc.org](mailto:peter@cpfumc.org)  
[suzette@cpfumc.org](mailto:suzette@cpfumc.org)  
[carolynsmith2215@gmail.com](mailto:carolynsmith2215@gmail.com)  
[jodi\\_blount@hotmail.com](mailto:jodi_blount@hotmail.com)  
[lund121@me.com](mailto:lund121@me.com)

Be sure to put "Newsletter" in the subject for Connections submissions!



# CPFUMC Calendar November 2022

Click [here](#) to go to the most up to date online calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 8:30am - In-Person 9:45am - SS in-person & 10:45am - In-Person 10:45am - Livestream	31 4pm - Piano Lessons - 7:30pm - Centering	1 9:30am - Morning Prayer 10am - Bible Study 10am - HCCM 11am - Prayer Shawl	2 4pm - Piano Lessons -	3 10am - Methodist Book 3:30pm - Piano Lessons -	4 10:30am - Women's 4:30pm - Piano Lessons - 7:30pm - Alcoholics	5 10am - Post Pumpkin 1:30pm - Piano Lessons -
6 8:30am - In-Person 9:45am - SS in-person & 10:45am - In-Person 10:45am - Livestream	7 4pm - Piano Lessons - 7pm - TRUSTEES in- 7:30pm - Centering	8 9:30am - Morning Prayer 10am - Bible Study 10am - HCCM 11am - Prayer Shawl	9 4pm - Piano Lessons -	10 10am - Methodist Book 3:30pm - Piano Lessons -	11 10:30am - Women's 4:30pm - Piano Lessons - 7:30pm - Alcoholics	12 10am - PEO Meeting @
13 8:30am - In-Person 9:45am - SS in-person & 10:45am - In-Person 10:45am - Livestream	14 4pm - Piano Lessons - 7:30pm - Centering	15 9:30am - Morning Prayer 10am - Bible Study 10am - HCCM 5:30pm - Prayer Shawl	16 10:30am - Mbrshp, Care 4pm - Piano Lessons - 6:30pm - Buckle & Bows	17 10am - ACH 3:30pm - Piano Lessons -	18 10:30am - Women's 4:30pm - Piano Lessons - 7:30pm - Alcoholics	19 1:30pm - Piano Lessons - 3pm - Memorial Service
20 8:30am - In-Person 9:45am - SS in-person & 10:45am - In-Person 10:45am - Livestream	21 4pm - Piano Lessons - 7:30pm - Centering	22 9:30am - Morning Prayer 10am - Bible Study 10am - HCCM 11am - Prayer Shawl	23 4pm - Piano Lessons -	24 3:30pm - Piano Lessons -	25 <b>NEWSLETTER Input Due</b> 10:30am - Women's 4:30pm - Piano Lessons - 7:30pm - Alcoholics	26 12:30pm - Holiday Inn 1:30pm - Piano Lessons -
27 8:30am - In-Person 9:45am - SS in-person & 10:45am - In-Person 10:45am - Livestream 12pm - Thanks for Giving	28 4pm - Piano Lessons - 6:30pm - Council Meeting 7:30pm - Centering	29 9:30am - Morning Prayer 10am - Bible Study 10am - HCCM 11am - Prayer Shawl	30 9:30am - (No title) 4pm - Piano Lessons -	1 9:30am - (No title) 3:30pm - Piano Lessons -	2 10:30am - Women's 4:30pm - Piano Lessons - 7:30pm - Alcoholics	3 9:30am - Tea and Treats 1:30pm - Piano Lessons -