



June 2017

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church

# Connections

## Newsletter

*A Spiritual Oasis Committed to Christ,  
to Peace, and to Service*

**Get ready for the return of our Mega Sports Vacation Bible School and  
Open heARTS Summer Art Camp this summer!**



**The MEGA Sports VBS is on the calendar for the week of June 19 – 23 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.** Tell your friends, tell everyone, and most importantly invite everyone. VBS is open to all children who will be entering Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade in August 2017. Remember **VBS is FREE** to all children. Please check the church website for **VBS continued on page 10**

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# JESUS ROCK STAR CORNER

Submitted by Carolyn Smith

May has been a special month for the Jesus Rock Stars. In discussing the many events which happen in May the children shared their stories about how much their mothers do for them. In sharing these stories they were reminded of the things all ladies of our church also do for them. The children wanted to prepare a special gift for all the ladies which were handed out during Children's moment on Mother's Day.



**They started out with craft sticks and glue.**



**With markers they added their special love to each card.**



**Being a mother is hard work as these two angels told us about in their skit during Children's Moment.**



**The children also remembered their fathers and have started a special gift just for them. We will all see this special gift on Father's Day.**

May is also a time when many children move from one step in their lives to take their next step. Just like school several of our children will be moving from Children's Sunday to the Youth Group. These children will be really be missed but grateful they will be nearby and help us in our special projects.



## Open heARTS summer camp July 24th through July 28th

Spread the word! CPFUMC has a summer art camp! This is the 2nd year to sign your kids up for a fun and educational summer camp.

Activities include art, music, movement, and science.

Your child will make creative art projects like shrinky dinks and use water colors. They will learn about various music composers and musical styles in music. In movement they will be learning fun games and dances from various parts of the world and in science we will make slime among other things.

Please go to [www.cpfumc.org](http://www.cpfumc.org) for more information.



## A Child's Haven Happenings

Submitted by Lesley Foyt

A Child's Haven wrapped up another school year in May. Our Pre-K class had their graduation on May 18<sup>th</sup>. They received their preschool diplomas and had a fun celebration afterwards with the Kona Ice snow cone truck. We are very proud of our graduates and know they are going to do wonderful things in the years to come! Also in May the kids enjoyed eating Chick-Fil-A for lunch, having a visit from the Cedar Park Fire Department, as well as a visit from a veterinarian, Dr. Miller, who is a part of our school family. It was a very busy and exciting month!

My sincere thanks to Pastor Peter and Pastor Bonnie for leading chapel with the kiddos this year. The children were always eager to listen to the bible story and learn about God's love. They really loved singing all the songs they learned throughout the year. I also wanted to thank the CPFUMC family for supporting our scholarship program with your donations. Your generosity helps provide financial assistance for families in our preschool program. It is greatly appreciated!

We will begin the 2017-2018 school year on August 28<sup>th</sup>. I am excited to say that most of our teachers are returning and we are adding a Kinder Bridge class for next year. This class will give families the opportunity to have an extra year of academic, emotional, and spiritual growth for their child before entering their formal kindergarten year at school. We are blessed to have the opportunity to offer this class to children in our community. Have a wonderful summer!

## Is There a Champion for Peace?

Submitted by Neil Howard

Our motto says, “A Spiritual Oasis, Committed to Christ, ***Committed to Peace***, Committed to Service.” In front of our church building, right in the middle of the flagstone patio is our Peace Pole.

In times past this Peace Pole was a symbol of our congregation’s commitment to promoting peace, particularly peace in families. Several other Peace Poles were planted in Cedar Park and other far-away places by committed members of our church.

The area around the base of our peace pole has recently been cleaned up and nicely decorated with a cactus garden. Our Peace Pole itself, however, is looking a bit tired and worn out. Many have noticed this. “We need to do something about that,” is a typical comment heard concerning this situation. So far, the “Royal We” and the “Royal They” have not found a way to address this situation. The talk continues.

Is there a Champion for Peace?



### A Prayer of Healing for Mental Illness

May the One who blessed our ancestors bless all those who live with mental illness, their care-givers, families and friends;

May they walk in the footsteps of Jacob, King Saul, Miriam, Hannah and Naomi who struggled with dark moods, hopelessness, isolation and terrors, but survived and led our people.

Just as our father, Jacob, spent the night wrestling with an angel and prevailed, may all those who live with mental illness be granted the endurance to wrestle with their pain and prevail night upon night.

Grace them with the faith to know that though, like Jacob, they may be wounded, shaped and renamed by this struggle, still they will live on to continue an ever unfolding, unpredictable path toward healing.

May they not be alone on this path but accompanied by their families, friends, care-givers, ancestors and the Divine presence.

Surround them with loving-kindness, grace, and companionship and spread over them a sukkat shalom, a shelter of peace and wholeness.

And let us say: Amen.

© Rabbi Elliot Kukla, 2008





## Festival of Homiletics

Submitted by Bonnie How

I was recently blessed to attend the Festival of Homiletics in San Antonio for a whole week! I've told many people about it and I've often been asked, "What's that?" It's a preaching festival, where pastors and preachers from all around the world come together to hear amazing preaching and to learn from other preachers. The Festival began 25 years ago with about 400 attendees. This year had over 1800 clergy in attendance! Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn. organizes the festival each year and draws guest speakers from the four corners of the world.

Each day we had beautiful worship experiences and lectures. I was often moved to tears as I heard gospel stories told from fresh perspectives. Our theme was "Preaching on the Borders" and the music was absolutely anointed by the Holy Spirit.

I wish I could share it all with you but there was so much that was good! Instead, I'll share the highlights with you.

First of all, I have to tell you about Joshua Sommerville, an incredibly talented musician and vocalist who led the worship at Travis Park UMC. He takes traditional hymns and plays them in a gospel style, with jazzy piano and expressive, uplifting vocals. I have never danced like that before in church!

Dr. Anna Carter Florence is a professor at Columbia Theological Seminary. Her text was John 4:3-30, the woman at the well. This text recurred throughout the week and I was astounded to hear such a variety of messages given on this one text. Dr. Florence said that this is the longest conversation between Jesus and any other person in Scripture. When you think about it, it is a shocking fact because Jesus was not supposed to be in any sort of conversation with this person, a Samaritan and a woman. Yet, Jesus chose to engage and she, despite the unusual circumstances, meets him. In essence, both cross the border to have this conversation. It brings me hope to think that we also can cross the social norm border and engage with the "other", having a conversation that might end up being a significant, life-changing exchange.

She also said "staying in conversation is to stay in relationship." I took that to heart as we, in the UMC, are facing decisions within our denomination that require us to stay in conversation in order to stay in relationship. If we stop talking with each other, we are essentially writing each other off, breaking our relationship.

Another incredible preacher was Bishop Yvette A. Flunder. She is an advocate for radical inclusion and justice, preaching at churches, the White House and the Supreme Court. She is the Presiding Bishop of the Fellowship of Affirming Ministries, a multi-denominational, international coalition of primarily African American churches, with Hispanic and Asian representatives as well. Her message of God preparing us to be sanctuary, not a sanctuary, was especially powerful. She spoke of how Jesus did not find sanctuary in his hometown, and how the absence of affirmation, hospitality, and welcome hinders the power of God and the kingdom of God. Jesus couldn't do God's work because he was judged by his "used to be"! His community

**FESTIVAL continued on page 11**

## UM ARMY Summer 2017

Submitted by Bonnie How

Several of our youth and youth volunteers are heading out into the wild, blue yonder on June 25th to build relationships, homes and community facilities, and a greater love of God. You've heard Shawn talk about the tools that we are looking to either borrow or have donated for this and future missions, but I wanted to tell you a bit about our volunteers. I hope that you will be in prayer for each person throughout the next several weeks.

Shawn Dubler has been volunteering with the youth for the past two years. He went on UM Army last year with the middle schoolers and had a great experience. His passion for this ministry is second to none! He will be accompanying the Middle School Team to Dripping Springs.

Russ Lundstrom also is going for the second time as a volunteer, however this year he will be a solo volunteer with the High School Team as they travel to La Grange. He has lots of experience with youth and campus ministry, and has a heart for people. He's a great asset.

Elizabeth Talley is going to try something new this year, staying in Texas. She's been with ASP each year that we've gone and her skills with power tools are great! She is also quick to reach out to others so I know that she will be fast friends with everyone she meets.

Karsten Lundstrom is going to UM Army as a high school student. This will be his first time working on homes, and doing some more complicated work. His laid back



attitude will be an asset as sometimes projects can be a bit stressful.

Jett Heermans will be our third high school student going to La Grange. Jett is often seen dancing - he must have a song in his heart. He certainly has a "how can I help" attitude that will be very appreciated.

Luke Talley will be going to UM Army Basic, the middle school mission in Dripping Springs. He is our group's prayer warrior and I am confident that he will be lifting up all circumstances to God.

Allie Short is going to be great on the team. She is always full of energy and loves being outside. Her work ethic will definitely inspire others.

We are excited to have two new youth members joining our mission team:

Abigail Dubler is definitely committed to service, as shown through her participation in youth and as an acolyte.

Ashlyn Short is quick to offer a helping hand and jump in to help wherever she's needed.

Please be in prayer for all these missionaries, and myself! We appreciate it!

~Pastor Bonnie

## Eagles Coffee Club

Submitted by Steve Howard



Cedar Park 1st UMC's Eagles Coffee Club recently had a record turnout of 14 men for its Friday morning "Red Shirts Day" coffee gathering. The Eagles Coffee Club is a group of mainly senior men who meet each Wednesday and Friday at 9 a.m. at the Randall's on Cypress Creek in Cedar Park. Once a month, usually the second Wednesday of the month, they gather for breakfast at 8:30 a.m. at the Los Reyes restaurant on North Bell Boulevard.

The Eagles Coffee Club was founded by the late Jim Nabhan and Andy Carver. Andy's long-time friend Jim Timms was one of the earliest members. The three of them originally met for coffee and conversation at the Lakeline Barnes and Noble, but over time as the group grew it relocated to Randall's.

The Eagles Coffee Club is a place where fellowship and conversation is shared. As explained on the official Eagles Coffee Club thermos, members offer advice on "politics, finance, music, engineering, military, archaeology, cars, electronics and religion". Sports is also a frequent topic and many men are in a fantasy football league. At times solutions to the world's most pressing problems are developed. Many stories are

**EAGLES continued on page 9**



Submitted by Sheryl McNichol

I wanted to update you all on Be the Church Sunday, which was April 23rd. The United Methodist Women were committed to collections for the Flood Buckets. With your help and donations I am pretty confident that we will reach our goal of 25 buckets. Now, you must know that when Anita Martin suggested this, we all turned our heads at her and laughed. As of right now we have 17 buckets that are complete. Rockbridge UMC was instrumental in this process. They came in with enough supplies for 10 buckets and assembled all their buckets on that day. What a blessing to have their support. But you all are blessings too, because I still have \$140.00 left from your donations. Each bucket we got down to \$36.00. So, I think Anita is laughing at us now. I am in the process of working with Leander UMC. They have a group of kids this summer that are going to UMCOR in Baldwin, Louisiana. Their kids must arrive with kits assembled, and that's where we come in. So exciting!!!!

On June 9th is the UMW lunch at the Annual Conference in Corpus Christi. The Topic: Courage to do Justice, with speaker Rev. Hilary Marchbanks, Associate Pastor, St. John's UMC, Austin. For lunch tickets see either Sue Sidney or Pastor Peter.

On June 18th, the women of the Church are going to worship at the Pointe. Please put this date on your Calendar, we would love to have you come join us in Worship at 3:30. For more details on that please see Anita Martin.

**UMWOMEN continued on page 9**



## Road Sign Beautification Project Completed

Several members noticed the foliage around our road sign had gotten a little out of control. And this was **after** the recent Congregation Work Day was over.



The group decided to take action. John Vinson got a proposal from our mowing contractor to create a nice limestone block border around our road sign. The cost was \$600 to be raised from donations from members and friends. Trustees approved the project in April. The contractor said that he could start the project in 2 days. Rather than wait for the funds to be raised in advance, the work was begun and completed with the firm conviction that members would respond and John would not be left "holding the bag."



Respond we did! Following a short talk by John at the April 30<sup>th</sup> potluck, over \$420 was raised that day. The remainder came in during the next week. So our faith and firm

conviction was rewarded and a beautiful, welcoming roadside symbol was completed and paid for. Thanks be to God!

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### EAGLES from page 8

told, some are true.

Most of the men who attend are veterans. Red shirts are worn each Friday and the Wednesday breakfast to honor those who have served, and are serving in the military, or who are first responders.

In addition to fellowship, the men look after each other, helping out when the occasion arises. If you are looking to get out of the house for coffee, conversation and good friendship join us at Randall's, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9 a.m.

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### UMWOMEN from page 8

July 7-9th is Mission U. We talk about this every year. We would love for you to come and ask either Sue Sidney or me about these studies, or you can find out more online at <http://www.umwriotexas.org/mission-u/>.

Classes offered this year include:

Spiritual Growth: Living as a Covenant Community, Climate Justice, Missionary Conferences of the U.S., Children's Study: Joined and Held Together, and Youth Study: In Mission Together

We encourage each of you come to one of our meetings and find out more about the United Methodist Women on a Local level, District level and National level. We usually meet the 2nd Saturday of each month. In June we will be meeting the 3rd Saturday at my house for breakfast the final packing of the buckets.

Love in Christ,

*Sheryl McNichol*

## OUTDOOR from page 5

When we received bids last November, the cost of the complete project was substantially more money than we had in our Memorials Fund, the primary funding source for this improvement. Consequently, the Trustees decided to break the project into smaller phases. John Vinson helped the Trustees with the first phase by obtaining a bid for the stonework portion of the project. A satisfactory proposal of \$18,410 for the stonework was obtained from the company that did our recent road sign beautification project. In the meantime, several very generous contributions came in to our Memorials Fund. The Memorials Committee met on April 30<sup>th</sup> and approved up to \$20,000 of the Memorials Fund to be spent on this project. The Memorials Committee performed a final walk-through on May 14<sup>th</sup> to confirm the outline and placement of the stonework borders for the various planter beds in the design. John Vinson shows the



Memorials Committee the location of the stonework in the photo below.

Consequently, on May 23<sup>rd</sup> the project began with pruning the trees in and around the MOS. Austin Tree Experts, the same company which performed tree pruning during our parking lot project, did the pruning. The stonework is expected to begin in late May or early June.

The next phase of this project is to install

drip tubing irrigation in all of the beds, estimated at \$2500. The plants specified in the landscaping plan are all very drought-tolerant, but they need to get established and will need some minimal irrigation to grow properly. The final phases of the project include bringing in 57 cubic yards of dirt, 17 yards of topsoil 10 yards of mulch, the 6 foot mountain laurel tree and the 95 shrubs. We figure that this phase would be a good project for the congregation some time in the future when we have the additional estimated \$12,000 to pay for the materials.

The MOS landscaping project, which began in June 2016 with installation of 140 tons of crushed granite, is now moving along again!

## VBS from page 1

online registration or the paper registration form in this newsletter. Extra copies will be available on the table at the back of the sanctuary.

There will be the usual basketball, soccer, and cheerleading but also a new sport, **MARTIAL ARTS**. So many choices, which one will you select?

**VBS volunteers** are needed. We have had a wonderful team of VBS volunteers and hope they will be returning along with you. We need adults as well as youth to make this year as successful as before. Will you be part of our team? This is a sports camp and we need coaches. If sports are not your thing, we need spiritual leaders, song leaders, refreshment preparers, and organizational and creative leaders.

If you are interested in volunteering please contact Carolyn Smith (512) 970-9087.

## FESTIVAL from page 6

remembered him as he used to be rather than who he had become. “We cannot assume that people are in the same place that we last left them!”

Bishop Flunder talked about how we ought to be at home in the church, which means that we can bring our whole, authentic selves to our church family. We are supposed to be safe, to be sanctuary for our brothers and sisters in Christ. She challenged us to be sanctuary, providing supportive mentorship, and affirmation. Using the story of the prodigal son, she acknowledged that the son who stayed behind did all he was supposed to do, and felt resentment because he didn't feel valued and affirmed. While the family is reconciled with the return of the prodigal, it's obvious that reconciliation doesn't mean that all is now peaches and cream. The family has work to do. Bishop Flunders suggests family counseling might be in order! This is true of the church. We have to be aware that while we are figuring out what it means to affirm each other, deep pain is often revealed and needs to be addressed.

Bishop Flunder also spoke of hospitality, offering a space where a stranger can enter and become a friend. The tension between safety and courage is real, as we try to bring our whole, yet broken, selves into relationship. We have to be radical, reaching out to the farthest margins so that we can offer a clear message of welcome. Radical means that we recognize, value, celebrate and love people. It has to be our first priority, because it was Jesus' first priority! He was always on the margins, crossing social boundaries to heal the lepers, speak to the tax collectors, and consort with the “other”. Will Willimon echoed this sentiment in his talk when he said, “If you're going to work for Jesus, you've got to be willing to cross borders, to relocate. We are all

immigrants, naturalized citizens of the kingdom of God.”

Finally, Rev. Grace Imathiu was my hero of the week. Her sermon, “Border Scandal” again reinterpreted the story of the woman at the well in a way that I'd never heard before. I'd love to share it all with you but I'm going to hold it close to my heart for a moment longer and maybe I'll use some of her ideas for a sermon. I'll give you just a taste. “Maybe the woman at the well is a prisoner of hope, grounded in the past of her people, and looking to the hope of the coming Messiah. Maybe when she is saying, ‘I have no husband’, she's saying, ‘I have no protection. I am vulnerable.’ And as Jesus is offering her living water, he's actually offering her protection and compassion rather than freedom from sin.”

These are just the highlights but I invite you to please come and talk to me if you want to hear more. I am ordering some recordings of sermons and messages that I heard and I'd love to share them with you all!

Peace be upon you.

*Bonnie*



# CPFUMC June 2017

See full calendar online at  
<https://cpfumc.org/find-an-event/>

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church, CARE Calendar, Child's Haven Events, Choir, CP1UMC Youth, Jun 2017 (Central Time)  
 Other Groups, Pumpkin Patch, SCOUTS, United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 8:30am - Worship 9:45am - Sunday 10:45am - Worship 6pm - Youth @	29 10am - Talley Piano 2pm - ESL - GED @ 7:30pm - Contempla	30 9:30am - Morning 10am - Bible Study 3pm - Talley Piano 7:30pm - AA Men's	31 11:30am - Talley 1pm - Easy Line 5pm - Spaghetti 7pm - Bible Study -	1 10:15am - Disciple 2pm - Talley Piano 6:30pm - Buckles	2 6:30pm - Alcoholics	3 8:30am - Cub Scout
4 10am - Worship 11:30am - Communi 6pm - Youth @	5 10am - Talley Piano 2pm - ESL - GED @ 7:30pm - Contempla	6 9:30am - Morning 10am - Bible Study 3pm - Talley Piano 6:30pm - COUNCIL 7:30pm - AA Men's	7 11:30am - Talley 1pm - Easy Line 7pm - Bible Study -	8 Bonnie Graduates 2pm - Talley Piano 6:30pm - Buckles	9 6:30pm - Alcoholics	10 9am - NO UMW
11 10am - Worship 11am - VBS 4pm - UMW @ 6pm - Youth @	12 10am - Talley Piano 2pm - ESL - GED @ 6:30pm - FINANCE 7:30pm - Contempla	13 9:30am - Morning 10am - Bible Study 3pm - Talley Piano 7:30pm - AA Men's	14 11:30am - Talley 1pm - Easy Line 7pm - Bible Study -	15 10:15am - Disciple 2pm - Talley Piano 6:30pm - Buckles	16 NEWSLETTER Input 6:30pm - Alcoholics	17
18 10am - Worship 3:30pm - Worship @ 6pm - Youth @	19 10am - Talley Piano 2pm - ESL - GED @ 6pm - MEGA SPORTS 6:30pm - TRUSTEES 7:30pm - Contempla	20 9:30am - Morning 10am - Bible Study 3pm - Talley Piano 6pm - MEGA SPORTS 7:30pm - AA Men's	21 9:30am - Mbrship 11:30am - Talley 1pm - Easy Line 6pm - MEGA SPORTS 7pm - Bible Study -	22 10:15am - Disciple 2pm - Talley Piano 6pm - MEGA SPORTS 6:30pm - Buckles	23 6pm - MEGA SPORTS 6:30pm - Alcoholics	24 8am - Open Doors @
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
UM ARMY High School Mission @ La Grange, TX 78945, USA						
UM ARMY Basic Middle School Mission @ Dripping Springs, TX, USA						
10am - Worship 6pm - Youth @	10am - Talley Piano 2pm - ESL - GED @ 7:30pm - Contempla	9:30am - Morning 10am - Bible Study 3pm - Talley Piano 7:30pm - AA Men's	11:30am - Talley 1pm - Easy Line 7pm - Bible Study -	10:15am - Disciple 2pm - Talley Piano 6:30pm - Buckles	6:30pm - Alcoholics	8:30am - Cub Scout