



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

January 2020

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church

Connections

Newsletter

January YOUTH News

Submitted by Pastor Suzette

YOUTH are on the move this month: we participated with Advent study exploring the aspects surrounding Christ's birth with multigenerational wisdom and funny skits; we have raked a tremendous amount of leaves (37 bags in 2 hours); helped moved Marylin's items; sang carols at The Point; raked more leaves; finished out the on-line auction; decorated the church for the season; had a fabulous Christmas party at Jozi and Jett's place (I have never played Christmas Turkey before or laughed so hard - what a hoot!!)

Thanks to your generous support and encouragement we are \$1300 forward towards our Holy Land Trip in 15 months. We still have far to go so please let Pastor Suzette (suzette@cpfumc.org) know if you have yard work, babysitting, pet sitting or honey-do lists the YOUTH can tackle. On that note:

Please, as you do your end of year cleaning, DO NOT DONATE your household items just yet. In

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Planned Giving

By the Stewardship Ideas Committee

We all know that there are many ways to give to the Church besides the offering plate. People give their time, talents, and all sorts of other resources. Special opportunities come along to contribute to things like Youth Programs, Missions here in Cedar Park and abroad, and Special Projects like our beautiful parking lot and landscaping.

This is the time of the year when Methodists traditionally think about Stewardship and Pledges. But it is also tax season, and so we take this opportunity to review some of the creative and tax-advantaged ways that people can plan their giving.

A person who is over age 70 ½ and subject to Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) rules for IRAs, 401(k)s or similar Defined

GIVING continued on p. 4

JESUS' ROCK STAR CORNER

Submitted by Carolyn Smith

The journey to Bethlehem was exhausting. During the "Jesus is the Best Gift Ever VBS!" we experienced a little bit of what it might have been like to be Mary and Joseph during their journey to Bethlehem.



We started with understanding why it was important for Mary and Joseph to go to Bethlehem, during last days of her pregnancy. Everyone knew their family line. We discussed and listed the names in our own family trees. Did you know Joseph and May ate unleavened bread, whatever that is? We made two versions, one with whole wheat and the other gluten free. It was decided the gluten free was better than the whole wheat unleavened.

After a good night's sleep we started out on our journey. We needed to carry everything, including water and food. With pebbles in our shoes, morning came early and it was time to leave.



We were bundled up with arms loaded but the day quickly grew hot. Our feet were uncomfortable, the pebbles helped us experience some of their discomfort. With sore, tired feet we walked all day, carrying all our belongings. As the sun set we bedded down for the night.

The wild animals scared us and the robbers took all our belongings. After many days we made it to Bethlehem. All the inns were full, only one place for Mary to give birth to the savior, the stable. All the animals gathered, the shepherd, and wise men came, it was an amazing trip.

No event is complete without some of Ms. Sue's delicious foods. The children voted her the BEST COOK ever. Ms. Sue thank you so much.

We ended our day with games. Thank you to all the children for coming.



“Away from a Manger” A Christmas “Whodunit”

by Rachel Benjamin
and Suzanne Davis

This has been a very busy fall for us as we prepared for the performance. The children and Ms. Carolyn wish to thank all who helped us prepare:

Amanda Theriot Anabel Creel Laurel Fabian Jennifer Ruffcorn
Stephanie Talley Howard Theriot Neil Howard

Children participating:

Kaitlyn Mullen James Ruffcorn Josie Theriot Brooklyn Eanes
Rachel Longoria Leland Theriot James Mullen Elizabeth Ruffcorn

Special thanks to the youth who have helped to complete the cast:

Jozi Heermans Madie Johnson Ally Short Jett Heermans

With a huge hug and thank you to our congregation for all your love and support.

If you missed our performance or wish to watch it again, you use this link:

https://youtu.be/bzoc_lxjhrw

GIVING continued from p. 1

Contribution Plans can elect instead to make Qualified Charitable Distribution (QDCs) directly to the church. The donor avoids the taxes on the distribution and satisfies the distribution requirement for the year. Distributions from basis, if any, are also deductible.

Donations can also be made from a regular stock or bond portfolio (including mutual funds). The donor pays no taxes and receives a deduction equal to the (appreciated) Fair Market Value (if the donor has held the stock for at least a year). This can be a substantial tax savings for securities that have been in a portfolio for a long time. It is not necessary to donate an entire portfolio; many people make annual contributions from appreciated stock – converting capital gains tax bills into enhanced deductions.

Substantially the same rules as above apply to jewelry, works of art (not produced by the donor), and undeveloped land. (Developed land, buildings, and income property have separate rules.)

Both the RMD donation and the appreciated property donation have the added benefit of lowering Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) which can affect other tax items – like Social Security, or AMT. If the donor has held the stock for less than one year, the deduction is equal to the basis (usually the cost).

Many creative strategies exist for bequests to the church. The simplest is a direct gift as part of a will, but there are also remainder interests, trusts, life insurance and combinations limited only by the imagination! Nearly all forms of bequest

and planned giving can be used to reduce a taxable estate below the threshold for tax.

If you are considering any of these methods of giving, it is important to have the help of a good tax advisor, financial planner, and for estate matters, an attorney. There are lots of rules, and it is important that steps be taken in the right order. You should spend time thinking about your situation, your ability to give, and what avenue fits with your lifestyle and plans. Proper management of your giving can maximize the benefits both for you and for the church.

During Pledge Season, Tax Season, or anytime you are reviewing your giving and estate plans is a great time to think about these methods of giving. Regardless of what you decide is right for you, you should spend some time thinking about your plans and – most important – discuss it with your loved ones. If you would like to investigate these ideas further, a member of the Stewardship team will be glad to help.



January YOUTH News, continued from p. 1



January, the YOUTH will be collecting clothing and more (complete list to follow) as a fundraiser for HLT 2021. We will store the bags of items people donate to us then take them to SAVERS to be paid per pound. Tell your family and friends to hang onto the items until January then bring them to the church.

If you want to join us on our HOLY LAND TRIP 2021- open to all in church and beyond:

JANUARY 12th at NOON right after worship HOLY LAND TRIP meeting with nitty gritty details (cost/payments schedule/ itinerary/ deadlines etc.- invite friends/family to find out details. In the meantime:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p1E3N3zLkOjU0027YvehUogZo6kol2P-/view>



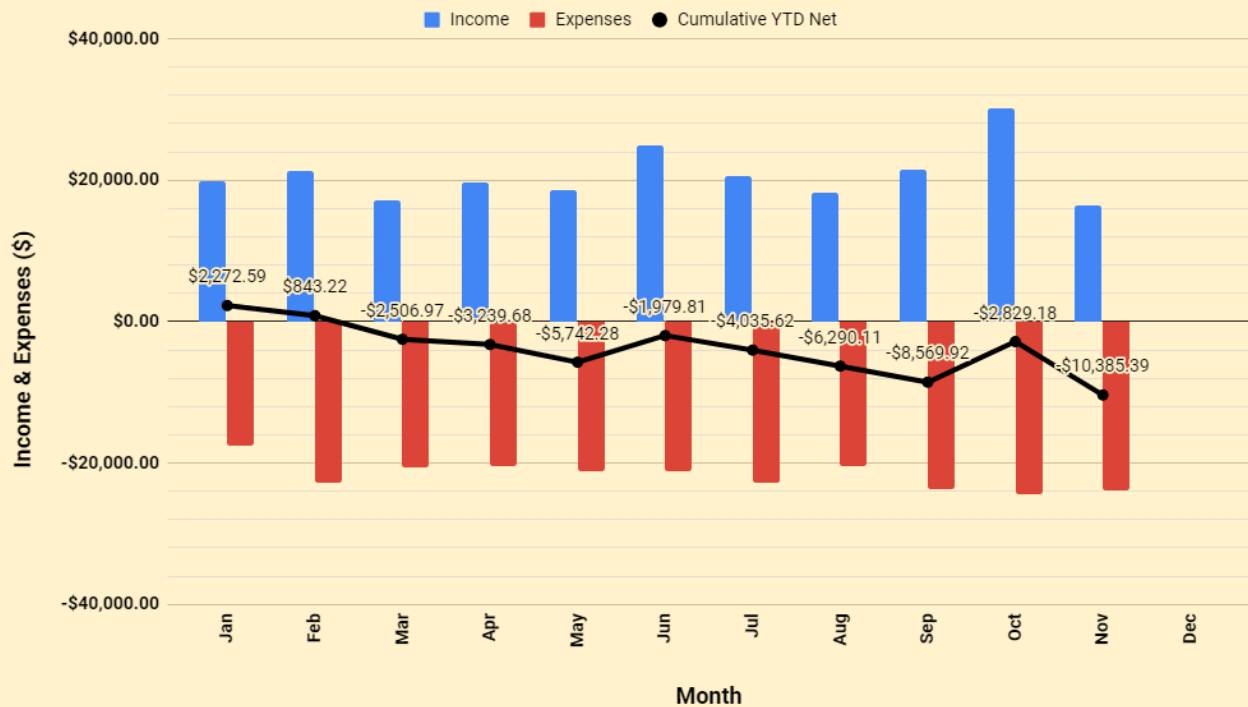
No YOUTH on Sunday Dec 29th

January 5th YOUTH resumes with lunch and worship at noon.

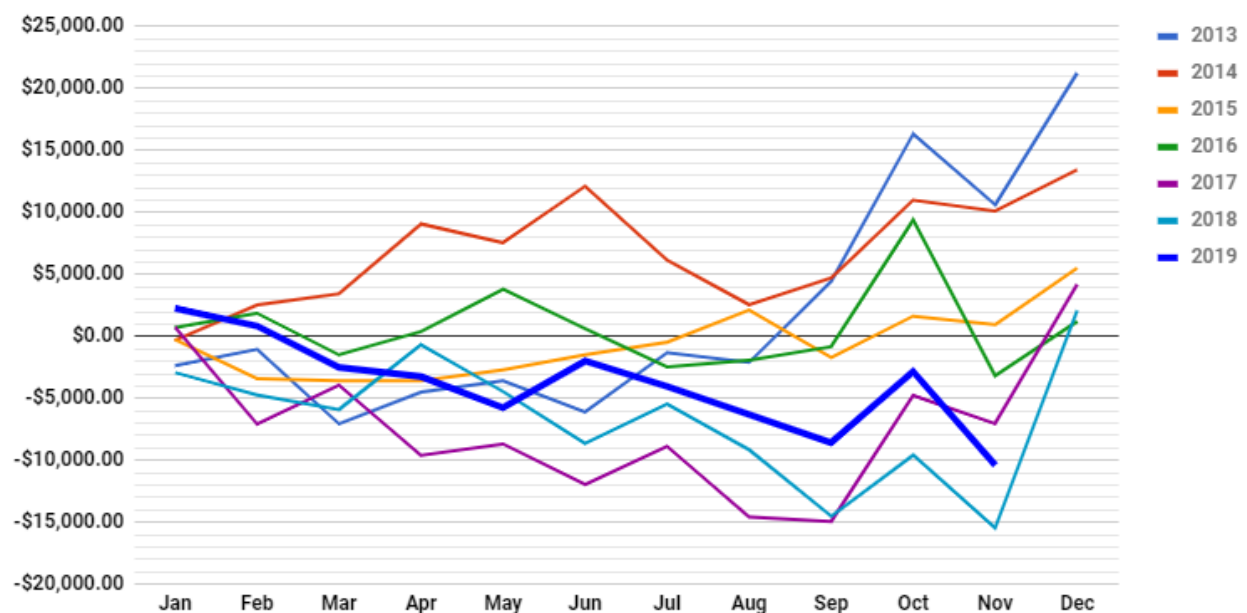
Peace, Suzette

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church Financial Information Through November 2019

Monthly Income, Expenses and Cumulative YTD Net
2019



Cumulative Total YTD Net (2013-2019)





A Child's Haven Happenings

By Lesley Foyt, Director

December was a very exciting month at A Child's Haven! The children learned about different types of music and celebrated the meaning of Christmas. We collected socks for the Leander ISD clothes closet this month and our families brought in many pairs for needy boys and girls. We are very appreciative for all the donations. There were lots of fun activities in the classrooms this month including making ornaments, making gifts for loved ones and decorating Christmas trees. During chapel this month the kids listened to the story of baby Jesus and sang "Away in a Manger" with Pastor Suzette.

Our Fruit of the Spirit this month was Peace. Colossians 3:15 says: "...let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts..." The children learned about the birth of Jesus this month and the peace he brings to our hearts. We had our Christmas Program on December 19th and all the children did a fabulous job singing songs they had learned. The Pre-K and Kinder Bridge classes acted out the story of Jesus' birth and how the angels and shepherds spread the joyful news.

In January our Fruit of the Spirit will be Joy. We are ready for 2020 and a new year of love and learning at A Child's Haven!

Blessings,
Lesley

Find us online at cpfumc.org
or call the church Tues-Thurs between 9 and 2
at this phone number:
(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 Steve Howard
Music Director/Pianist Jodi Blount
Children's Haven Director Lesley Foyt
Newsletter Editor Jill Lundstrom

peter@cpfumc.org
suzette@cpfumc.org
showard746@gmail.com
jodi_blount@hotmail.com
director@childshaven.net
lund121@me.com

CPFUMC Calendar January 2020

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church, CARE Calendar, Child's Haven Events, Choir, Jan 2020 (Central Time - Chicago)
CP1UMC Youth, Other Groups, Pumpkin Patch, SCOUTS, United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div>29</div> <div>10am - Worship</div> <div>12pm - NO Youth</div>	<div>30</div> <div>7:30pm - Centering</div>	<div>31</div> <div>9:30am - NO Prayer</div> <div>10am - NO Bible</div> <div>7:30pm - AA Men's</div>	<div>1</div> <div>New Year's Day</div> <div>1pm - NO Easy Line</div> <div>5:15pm - GS #40530 @</div>	<div>2</div> <div>8:30am - Tai Chi -</div> <div>10am - Tai Chi</div> <div>5pm - GS #40530 @</div>	<div>3</div> <div>6:30pm - Alcoholics</div>	<div>4</div> <div>9am - Girl Scout</div>
<div>5</div> <div>8:30am - Worship</div> <div>9:45am - Sunday</div> <div>10:45am - Worship</div> <div>12pm - Youth @</div>	<div>6</div> <div>2:15pm - ESL - GED -</div> <div>6:30pm - TRUSTEES</div> <div>7:30pm - Centering</div>	<div>7</div> <div>9:30am - Morning</div> <div>10am - Bible Study</div> <div>11am - Prayer Shawl</div> <div>6:30pm - Wolves @</div> <div>7:30pm - AA Men's</div>	<div>8</div> <div>1pm - Easy Line</div> <div>6:30pm - Buckles</div>	<div>9</div> <div>8:30am - Tai Chi -</div> <div>10am - Tai Chi</div>	<div>10</div> <div>8:30am - ESL - GED -</div> <div>6:30pm - Alcoholics</div>	<div>11</div> <div>9am - NO UMW</div>
<div>12</div> <div>8:30am - Worship</div> <div>9:45am - Sunday</div> <div>10:45am - Worship</div> <div>12pm - Youth @</div>	<div>13</div> <div>2:15pm - ESL - GED -</div> <div>6:30pm - FINANCE</div> <div>7:30pm - Centering</div>	<div>14</div> <div>9:30am - Morning</div> <div>10am - Bible Study</div> <div>11am - Prayer Shawl</div> <div>6:30pm - GS</div> <div>7:30pm - AA Men's</div>	<div>15</div> <div>9:30am - Mbrship</div> <div>1pm - Easy Line</div> <div>5:15pm - GS #40530</div> <div>6:30pm - Buckles</div>	<div>16</div> <div>8:30am - Tai Chi -</div> <div>10am - Tai Chi</div>	<div>17</div> <div>NEWSLETTER Input</div> <div>8:30am - ESL - GED -</div> <div>6:30pm - Alcoholics</div>	<div>18</div> <div>9am - BS Pinewood</div> <div>9:30am - P.E.O. "JX"</div>
<div>19</div> <div>8:30am - Worship</div> <div>9:45am - Sunday</div> <div>10:45am - Worship</div> <div>12pm - Youth @</div> <div>3:30pm - Worship @</div>	<div>20</div> <div>6:30pm - COUNCIL</div> <div>7:30pm - Centering</div>	<div>21</div> <div>9:30am - Morning</div> <div>10am - Bible Study</div> <div>11am - Prayer Shawl</div> <div>6:30pm - Wolves @</div> <div>7:30pm - AA Men's</div>	<div>22</div> <div>1pm - Easy Line</div> <div>6:30pm - Buckles</div>	<div>23</div> <div>8:30am - Tai Chi -</div> <div>10am - Tai Chi</div>	<div>24</div> <div>8:30am - ESL - GED -</div> <div>6:30pm - Alcoholics</div>	<div>25</div> <div>1pm - Spiritual Gifts</div>
<div>26</div> <div>8:30am - Worship</div> <div>9:45am - Sunday</div> <div>10:45am - Worship</div> <div>12pm - Youth @</div>	<div>27</div> <div>2:15pm - ESL - GED -</div> <div>7:30pm - Centering</div>	<div>28</div> <div>9:30am - Morning</div> <div>10am - Bible Study</div> <div>11am - Prayer Shawl</div> <div>7:30pm - AA Men's</div>	<div>29</div> <div>1pm - Easy Line</div> <div>5:15pm - GS #40530</div> <div>6:30pm - Buckles</div>	<div>30</div> <div>8:30am - Tai Chi -</div> <div>10am - Tai Chi</div>	<div>31</div> <div>8:30am - ESL - GED -</div> <div>6:30pm - Alcoholics</div>	<div>1</div> <div>5pm - Violin Recital</div>