



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

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church

# Connections

## Newsletter

### Holy Land Insights

submitted by Pastor Suzette

Our trip in March 2021 will traverse many areas of Scripture locations. You can check out specific scriptures on the daily itinerary in the brochure: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p1E3N3zLkOjU0027YvehUogZo6kol2P-/view>

The first day we are moving around in the Holy Lands, we travel from Caesarea by the Sea to Nazareth through the Jezreel Valley. For this article, I am going to focus on the Jezreel Valley.

Green valleys are a priceless commodity in a desert land. One place we will stop is Tel Megiddo where we will explore an archaeological dig of over 20 ancient cities dating back to 1500 BCE (or 3500 years ago) – one atop the other! Check out this link for specific details: <https://www.parks.org.il/en/reserve-park/tel-megiddo-armageddon-national-park/>

Around 1200 BCE before the Israelites had an established a monarchy, the Israelites had once again wandered from God’s direction and bowed too frequently at the altars of Baal. God chose to allow consequences to overflow. In the Book of Judges, chapters 6 and 7, we learn of the shifting tide. See scriptures: <https://biblehub.com/context/judges/6.htm> God has let

**HOLY LAND continued on p. 3**

### Announcement: All Church 2019 Giving Statements have been sent out

Unless last Fall, you specifically asked for a printed copy by mail, your 2019 statement was sent out to the default email address on file.

If your statement is missing, it may be that you have changed email addresses recently or we don’t have your preferred email address.

Contact Ron King or Jane Hilton to chase down the missing statements of giving.

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## JESUS' ROCK STAR CORNER

Submitted by Carolyn Smith



Very often we take others for granted. In studying how to acknowledge others in their many acts of kindness and guidance, we realized the need for God's guidance. We made prayer boxes, played thankful games, shared stories when others were kind to us and we were kind to others, and such.

Josie is making a word search game naming people for whom she is thankful.



Leland and Rachel, and two guest are studying David in the Lion's Den.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**EMPOWER – Saturday,  
April 18 from 5:00 pm to  
9:00 pm**

**MEGA Sports VBS - June  
15 to June 19, 6:00 pm to  
9:00 pm**

**Adults we need your help. Please complete the Safe Gathering recertification online. Registration is open to all adults, please consider registering if you have not before.**

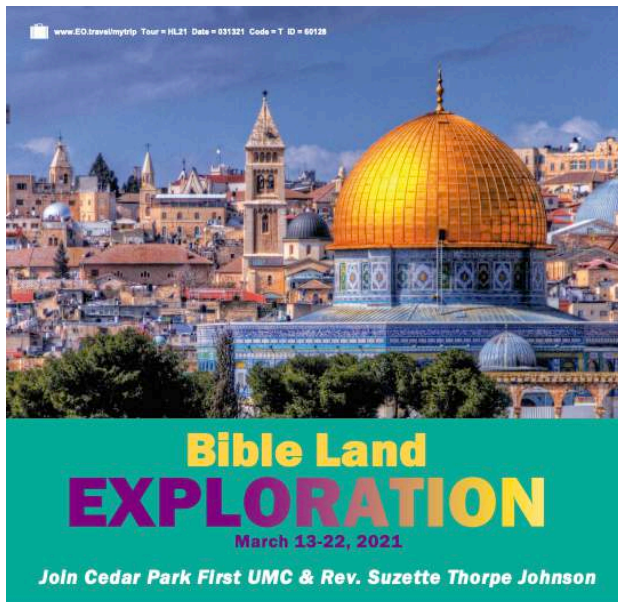
## HOLY LAND cont. from p. 1

the Israelites feel the sting of their disloyalty by allowing the Midianite oppression to be as locus to the Israelites. Every good crop, livestock or fruit was demolished by the Midianites. Finally, God calls forward a prophet and military hero: Gideon. (You might recall that name associated with hotel bibles).

Gideon doubts God is actually who God claims to be and asks for verification – how many times have we asked God to give us a sign?! God, of course, passes with flying colors and Gideon is tasked with pulling down the altar of Baal and worship poles. Then his name gets changed (as is typical in scripture). With his victory over Baal and his new name Jerubbaal, he is then called by God to lead an army against the oppressors. Then God repeatedly reduces the number of Gideon/Jerubbaal army. One test included requiring the men to drink from a spring which is still open for people to drink from to this day. Finally God is satisfied with a mere 300 warriors. The morning of the battle, 300 shofar are blown (see YOUTUBE: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9dkEe3ph\\_bU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9dkEe3ph_bU) to see and hear the horn). This caused great confusion for the enemy army which allowed Gideon's men to defeat the Midianites.

To travel from your laptop, check out: <https://www.bibleplaces.com/judges7/> This site will take you through the scripture time line with pictures of the various locations.

Please consider joining the YOUTH on this once in a lifetime journey into the roots of our faith. You will not be disappointed.



**Join Cedar Park First UMC & Rev. Suzette Thorpe Johnson on this Bible Land Exploration tour in 2021. This tour departs on March 13, 2021, and returns on March 22, 2021. On this tour, you will see sights like the Sea of Galilee, Caesarea by the Sea, Jerusalem and many more! This tour starts at \$3,696\* from Austin.**

**For more information go to**

**For more information go to**  
<http://www.eo.travelwithus.com/tours/hl21031321t60128#.Xi9xQhdKhTZ>

**Can't join us but still want to be a part of it? Contact to Suzette to find out how to support our Youth for the trip!**

## Protecting Our Vulnerable Members



Time gets away from us, it has been two years since our first **Safe Gatherings** and **Trusted con Confianza** training. Help us protect our children, youth, and vulnerable adults by renewing your certificate. About 45 days prior to your expiration you should receive an email notification with a link to renew. Please follow that link and complete the training. There are two online sessions, each one-hour long.

If you are new to this training, please find the sessions at <https://riotexas.org/safe>.

This training is vital for our church to be able to offer services to children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Without you completing the training our church cannot offer services to these individuals. We encourage everyone over the age of 18 years to complete the training.



### **First Aid/CPR with AED class**

**Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 10:00 am**

**CPFUMC's sanctuary.**

What do you do when your friend collapses onto the floor?

CPFUMC's own David Longoria, EMT will give us the answers. David is a first aid, CPR, and AED instructor. In addition, you will get a hands on experience with the church's AED equipment.

The class is designed to introduce you to first aid, CPR, and AED procedures. You will receive valuable instructions in how to react in a medical emergency. This class is not a certification class.

Everyone is welcome to attend regardless of previous classes. This is the perfect opportunity for a refresher class. You will be able to review the church's AED equipment.

Remember what Pastor Peter says, "We need to hear something seven times before we remember." How many

times have you heard the procedures for first aid, CPR, and AED?

Please sign-up at the back table in the sanctuary. There is no charge for this class.



**WE NEED YOU!**  
**MEGA Sports VBS**  
**June 15 – 19, 2020**  
**6:00 pm to 8:00 pm**  
**CPFUMC's grounds**

**We are looking for:**

- **Rally Coach** – the daily lesson
- **Sport Coaches**
- **Assistant Sport Coaches**
- **Huddle Coaches** – discussion leaders
- **Concession Coach** – one more needed  
Sue Sidney and Par Keys
- **Spectators** – watches from sideline
- **First Aid Coach** – David Longoria, EMT
- **Registrants**
- **Photographer** – needs own camera
- **MEGA** - in costume

We have begun planning this year's VBS and invite you to help us make this the best year. In 2019, we had approximately 60 children and youth. You are needed to help us keep the Safe Gatherings ratio of 1 to 8.

In 2019 we offered basketball, cheerleading, soccer, and golf. We have not finalized the sports for 2020. If you have a sport which you would like to lead, please let us know.

Most of your **Safe Gathering** certificates will expire soon. Please look for an email from Safe Gatherings approximately 45 days before expiration. You will need to complete this two-step process to renew your certification. If you are new to this training, please find the sessions at <https://riotexas.org/safe>.

Be the first to sign up and reserve the position that is right for you. If you have any questions, please reach out to Carolyn Smith or Amanda Theriot.

# BE LIGHT YOUTH March 2020

submitted by Pastor Suzette

Thank you – Thank you – Thank you!!! For your on-going support of the YOUTH Holy Land Trip 2021. Since November, we have raised around \$4000 from the on-line auction, Christmas wrapping, moving, Christmas lights, brush clearing, donations for HCCM, mulching, many other things and raking – A LOT OF RAKING!! We will be making our first payments for the trip this April. We still have more to earn for future payments but this puts us in a great starting point. Thank you for your generous support both financially as well as love and prayers for the YOUTH.

This March welcomes warming weather along with yard work. Please email Pastor Suzette if you have a project we might tackle to earn our way to the Holy Lands. ([suzette@cpfumc.org](mailto:suzette@cpfumc.org)) Do not wait too long as weekends will fill up quickly.

The YOUTH finished painting the trellis into the Memorial Garden. It was quite a task with many tiny nooks and crannies to reach but it looks great now as well as protected from the elements too.

**Confirmation** has begun. We are doing it slightly different this year. Pastor Suzette is developing a curriculum which focuses on developing theological skills. These skills will help our YOUTH explore, discuss and respond to difficult faith questions as they move into very diverse college settings. Every other Sunday will be confirmation swapping with the Holy Land Trip bible exploration. Topics include: Who is God; Trinity?; Authority of God and Scriptures; Science vs God?; and the Humanity of Jesus among other topics.

**March 8<sup>th</sup>: COMBINED MUSIC WORSHIP at GOOD NEWS UMC –  
all Cedar Park area ecumenical YOUTH event!  
Time to be determined.**

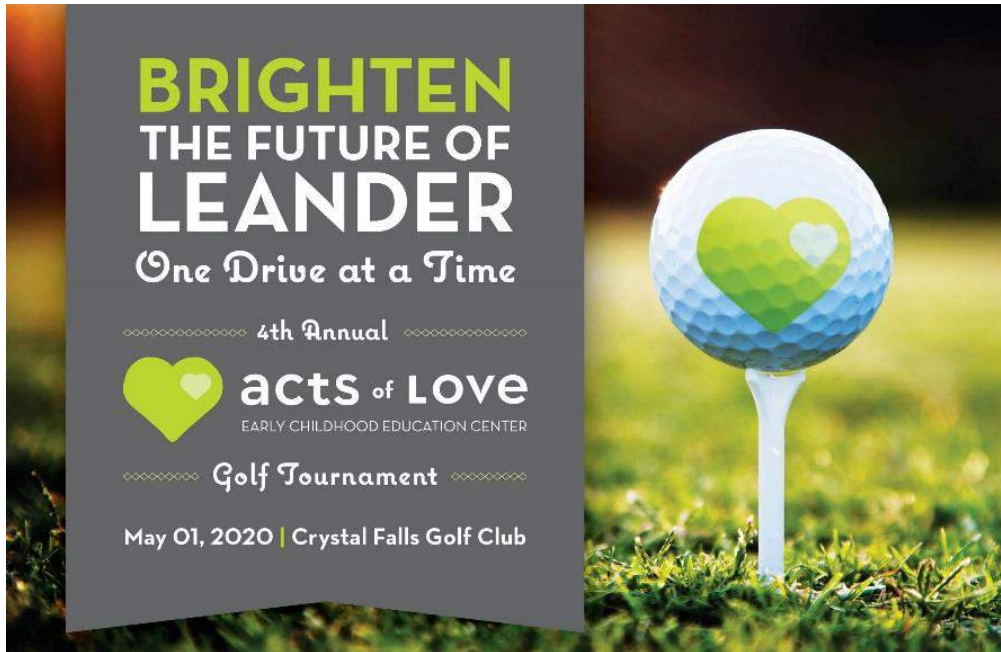
March 15<sup>th</sup> NO YOUTH spring break

March 22<sup>nd</sup> YOUTH resumes

March 25-28<sup>th</sup> Pastor Suzette in prison with Kairos Prison Ministry in Marlin, TX. Please lift the team, the ladies attending and the prison personnel as we create a space for the Holy Spirit to flow.

Looking ahead:

Sunday April 19<sup>th</sup> we will do a class along with the UMW exploring: Evil/Hope/Social Justice. We will watch the movie “Green Book.”



**ACTS of Love is thrilled to invite you to support our 4th Annual ACTS of Love Golf Tournament!**



**Golf Tournament**

**May 01, 2020 | 8:00am Tee Time**

Hosted by:

**Crystal Falls Golf Club**

3400 Crystal Falls  
Leander, TX 78646

**\$100 per player | \$400 per foursome**

**Scramble Format | Cart & Lunch Provided**

**Prizes will be up for grabs on:**

Mulligans | Longest Drive

Closest to the Pin | Putting Tournament

## Join us

for our 4th Annual ACTS of Love Golf Tournament hosted by Crystal Falls Golf Club.

All proceeds will benefit ACTS of Love Early Childhood Education Center. ACTS of Love is a non-profit early childhood center that provides free childcare and family services to teen-parents who plan to return to high school and graduate.

The tournament will be a Scramble Format and prizes will be up for grabs! Cart and Lunch are provided.

## Information

[www.actsofloveecec.com](http://www.actsofloveecec.com)

**Katie Evans**

[katie@actschurchleander.com](mailto:katie@actschurchleander.com) | 512-528-9948

## **CPFUMC LIBRARY is ready for books to be checked out in the conference room.**

Please sign the clipboard with the title of the book(s), DVD(s), your name, phone number, or an email address, date for checkout and the date you will return the book(s), DVD(s). Please return the books in the basket and Sergio will put the items where they go.

There are many categories: United Methodist Women's books, magazines, Christian fiction, devotionals, prayer, leadership, church ministries, children's resources, maps, posters and hymnals. Other categories include: Bibles, theology, religion, church, care giving grief and Bible (commentaries, dictionaries, handbooks, studies). There are also resources on DVD for check out.

Other resources on the bookshelves are greeting cards, coloring pages, colored pencils, stickers, markers and pens to be creative. Flame-less candles are available to be lit for reading, praying or being creative. I encourage you to take a few minutes in the room to relax, color, doodle, write an encouraging note, write a prayer or create a poem. Kinetic sand is available on the tray that is interesting to use in the room to calm and center yourself, as you seek peace with God. "Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10

Enjoy reading all the books in the library and have fun being creative.

Peace in Christ!

Debra Longoria

## **Digital Downloads of Note**

By the Stewardship Ideas Committee

Remember the personal commitments you made last November during the Pledge Campaign? Have you looked at yours lately for progress in achieving your goal(s)?

On that page, the first line of several considerations for asking you to make one more personal commitment this pledge season was:

I will read \_\_\_\_\_ chapter(s) in the Bible. (fill in the blank)

How's that going? We thought it might be helpful to share with you another avenue you may not have known about to read the Bible more. On your iPhone, Android, Kindle Fire, Blackberry or your home desk top computer, go to the App Store and find the Bible.com/app and download the Bible for free! This can be shared across all your devices.

This application allows you to read the text or listen to an audio recording of the Bible. You can even select to "receive a daily Bible verse" with an extra option to include an inspirational picture with the verse. You can choose font, size of print, color theme, etc. to customize your experience.

And you can select the version of the Bible you want to see, including whether the words are displayed in English, Spanish or 1385 other languages! Amazing, Grace.





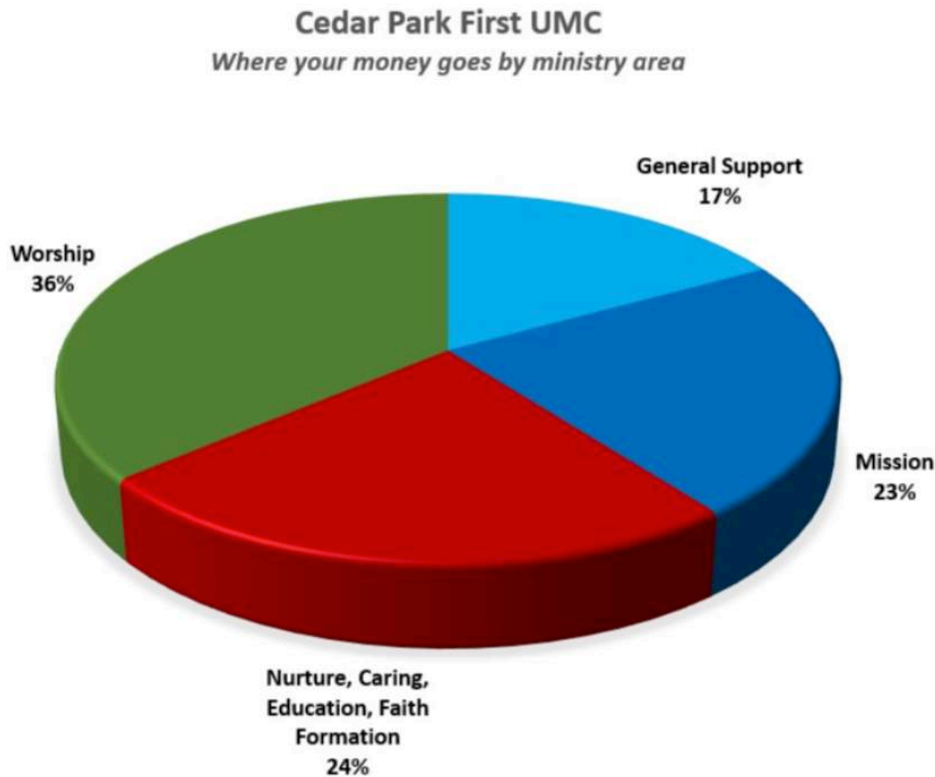
# CHURCH COUNCIL APPROVES 2020 BUDGET

Submitted by Walter Wilson, CPFUMC Finance Committee Chair

The generosity of our donors makes our Church's work in the world possible. For 2020 the Church Council has approved a budget of \$266,075. This represents only a slight increase from the 2019 budget of \$263,985. The frugality and careful stewardship of our staff and volunteers makes this possible.

Thank-you to everybody in both groups!

From an accounting perspective, our budget looks like that of any enterprise: most of the cost is in staff and physical plant (mortgage, building maintenance, utilities, etc.). Indeed, 76% of our expenses are for these items. Another 10% goes to Apportionments, our share of Conference expenses, international missions and other items as assigned by the Conference and the global Methodist Church. This leaves 14% to spend on the *fun* things like glue and construction paper, music for



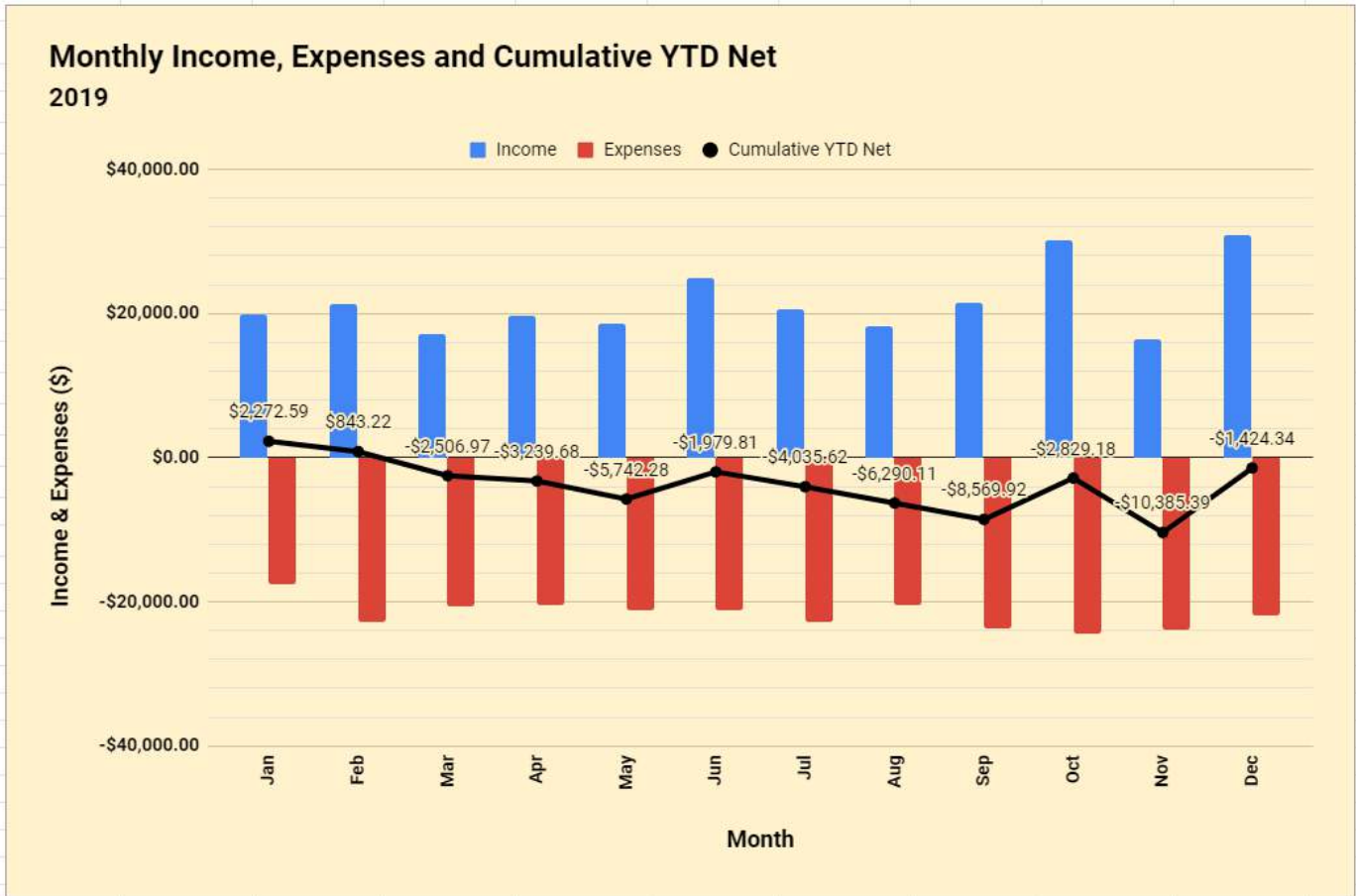
the choir, and Sunday school lessons. This is why your donations are so important. A building is what it is, but it is that extra \$10 of giving at the margin that makes new wonders possible.

But a pure accounting view doesn't show the full flower of our activities. Fixed overhead (staff and buildings) are not just a cost-block to be overcome. Staff time is spent and buildings are used in a wide array of activities in worship, mission, caring for members, working with children, outreach to the community – from the formal Sunday Service to the handful that come together every week to crochet shawls for the ill and aging to let them know that someone cares about them.

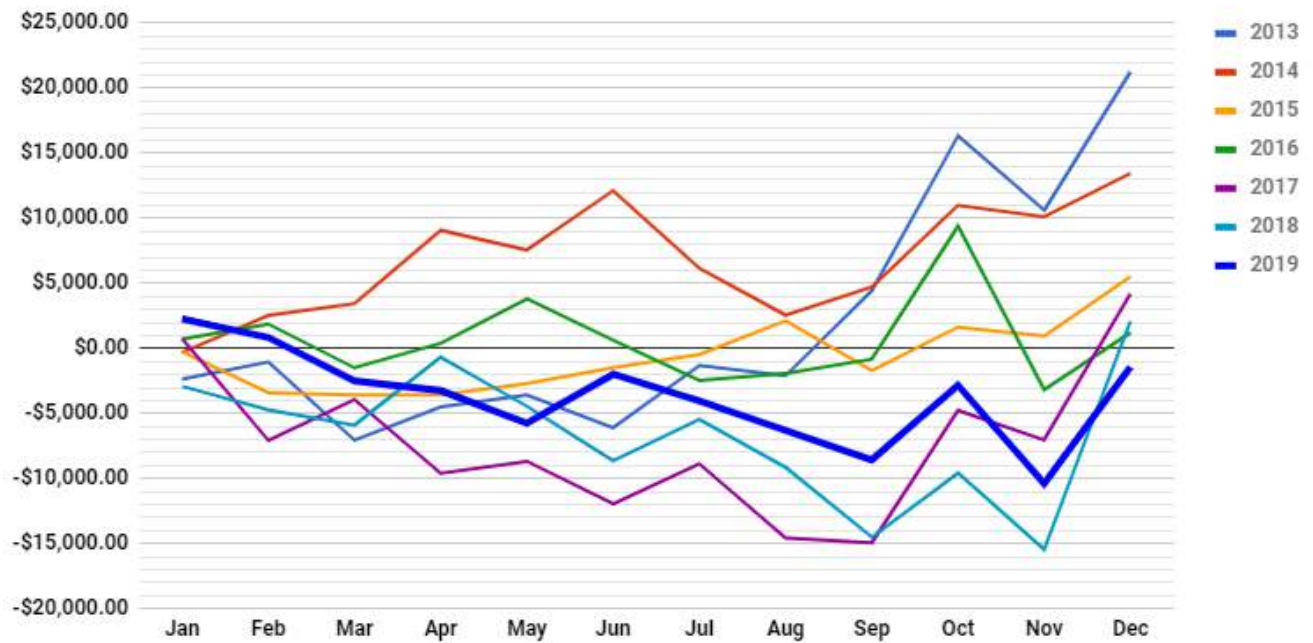
Last year, under the leadership of Jane Howard, a Stewardship Ideas Committee came up with a different way of looking at the budget. Viewed in this way, when you think about what staff time and facilities are used for, you see a very different perspective. The committee found that, in the 2019 budget, 83% of funds spent went for some form of worship, mission, or nurture and education. This tells a very different story that you can't see if you only look at accounting.

Our church will be what we come together to make it. It's like the old camp song says: *The Church is not a Building, / The Church is not a Steeple, / The Church is not a resting place, / The Church is its People.* Thanks to you for being the Church and making so many good works possible.

# Cedar Park First United Methodist Church Financial Information January-December 2019



### Cumulative Total YTD Net (2013-2020)





## A Child's Haven Happenings

By Lesley Foyt, Director

February was a special month celebrating love and friendship, and learning about our country and state. The kids had a great time at their Valentine's parties!.

The children exchanged Valentine cards, ate yummy treats and played fun games. They also learned about our country and state flags, and talked about the job of a president this month. Our Fruit of the Spirit this month was Joy. Psalm 95:1 says: Come, let us sing for joy unto the Lord..." The children learned about baptism in chapel this month with Pastor Suzette. In class, teachers talked about how following Jesus puts joy into our hearts.

Our Fruit of the Spirit this month was love. John 13:34 says "As I have loved you, so must you love one another." This month the kids demonstrated love by making special Valentine cards for Sage Brook Nursing Home. In class, the teachers talked about how God loves everyone and wants us to love our family, friends and neighbors. Pastor Suzette shared a special Valentine story and talked about how Jesus wants us to spread his love for everyone. In March our Fruit of the Spirit will be gentleness. We are looking forward to another great month of love and learning!

Blessings,

Lesley

Find us online at [cpfumc.org](http://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 Carolyn Smith  
Music Director/Pianist Jodi Blount  
Children's Haven Director Lesley Foyt  
Newsletter Editor Jill Lundstrom

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# CPFUMC Calendar March 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>26</p> <p><b>UMW Legislative Event</b></p> <p>8:30am Worship</p> <p>9:45am Sunday School</p> <p>10:45am Worship</p> <p>12pm Youth</p>	<p>27</p> <p>2:15pm ESL - GED - Comr</p> <p>6:30pm COUNCIL Mtg.</p> <p>7:30pm Centering Prayer</p>	<p>28</p> <p>9:30am Morning Prayer Service</p> <p>10am Bible Study</p> <p>11am Prayer Shawl Minist</p> <p>6:30pm Counters training</p> <p>7:30pm AA Men's Group</p>	<p>29</p> <p>11:30am Young @ Heart</p> <p>1pm Easy Line Dancing</p> <p>5:15pm GS #40530</p> <p>6:30pm Buckles and Bows</p>	<p>30</p> <p>8:30am Tai Chi - Intro</p> <p>10am Tai Chi Beginners</p>	<p>31</p> <p>8:30am ESL - GED - Comr</p> <p>6:30pm Alcoholics Anonym</p>	<p>Feb 1</p> <p>8am ReThink Mission</p> <p>5pm Violin Recital</p>
<p>2</p> <p>8:30am Worship</p> <p>9:45am Sunday School</p> <p>10:45am Worship</p> <p>12pm Youth</p>	<p>3</p> <p>2:15pm ESL - GED - Comr</p> <p>6:30pm TRUSTEES</p> <p>7:30pm Centering Prayer</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9:30am Morning Prayer Service</p> <p>10am Bible Study</p> <p>11am Prayer Shawl Minist</p> <p>6:30pm Wolves</p> <p>7:30pm AA Men's Group</p>	<p>5</p> <p>1pm Easy Line Dancing</p> <p>6:30pm Buckles and Bows</p>	<p>6</p> <p>8:30am Tai Chi - Intro</p> <p>10am Tai Chi Beginners</p> <p>5pm GS #40530</p>	<p>7</p> <p>8:30am ESL - GED - Comr</p> <p>6:30pm Alcoholics Anonym</p>	<p>8</p> <p>8am UMW Meets</p>
<p>9</p> <p>8:30am Worship</p> <p>9:45am Sunday School</p> <p>10:45am Worship</p> <p>12pm Youth</p>	<p>10</p> <p>2:15pm ESL - GED - Comr</p> <p>6:30pm FINANCE Commit</p> <p>7:30pm Centering Prayer</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9:30am Morning Prayer Service</p> <p>10am Bible Study</p> <p>11am Prayer Shawl Minist</p> <p>7:30pm AA Men's Group</p>	<p>12</p> <p>1pm Easy Line Dancing</p> <p>5:15pm GS #40530</p> <p>6:30pm Buckles and Bows</p>	<p>13</p> <p>8:30am Tai Chi - Intro</p> <p>10am Tai Chi Beginners</p>	<p>14</p> <p>8:30am ESL - GED - Comr</p> <p>6:30pm Alcoholics Anonym</p>	<p>15</p> <p>10am P.E.O. "JX"</p>
<p>16</p> <p>8:30am Worship</p> <p>9:45am Sunday School</p> <p>10:45am Worship</p> <p>12pm Youth</p> <p>3:30pm Worship @ The PC</p>	<p>17</p> <p>2:15pm ESL - GED - Comr</p> <p>6:30pm COUNCIL Mtg.</p> <p>7:30pm Centering Prayer</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9:30am Morning Prayer Service</p> <p>10am Bible Study</p> <p>11am Prayer Shawl Minist</p> <p>6:30pm Wolves</p> <p>7:30pm AA Men's Group</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:30am Mbrship Nurture/</p> <p>1pm Easy Line Dancing</p> <p>6:30pm Buckles and Bows</p>	<p>20</p> <p>8:30am Tai Chi - Intro</p> <p>10am Tai Chi Beginners</p>	<p>21</p> <p><b>NEWSLETTER Input Due</b></p> <p>8:30am ESL - GED - Comr</p> <p>6:30pm Alcoholics Anonym</p> <p>6:30pm P.E.O. "JX"</p>	<p>22</p> <p>8am Spiritual Gifts Class</p> <p>10am BS Brown &amp; Gold</p>
<p>23</p> <p>8:30am Worship</p> <p>9:45am Sunday School</p> <p>10:45am Worship</p> <p>12pm Youth</p> <p>12pm Pot Luck - 2020 Bu</p>	<p>24</p> <p>2:15pm ESL - GED - Comr</p> <p>5:45pm Colby HOV meetir</p> <p>7:30pm Centering Prayer</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9:30am Morning Prayer Service</p> <p>10am Bible Study</p> <p>11am Prayer Shawl Minist</p> <p>5pm Shrove Tuesday Pan</p> <p>7:30pm AA Men's Group</p>	<p>26</p> <p>1pm Easy Line Dancing</p> <p>5:15pm GS #40530</p> <p>6:30pm Buckles and Bows</p> <p>7pm Ash Wednesday Wor</p>	<p>27</p> <p>8:30am Tai Chi - Intro</p> <p>10am Tai Chi Beginners</p>	<p>28</p> <p>8:30am ESL - GED - Comr</p> <p>6:30pm Alcoholics Anonym</p>	<p>29</p> <p>8am Spiritual Gifts Class</p>