

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

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church

Connections

Newsletter

Holy Land 2021 UPDATE

Holy Land ZOOM Meeting Thursday, May 7th at 7pm

Good news for all who want to travel to the Holy Lands in 2021. The trip is still on!!

Here is a message form one of the guides in Jerusalem sending us encouragement in these trying times:

https://www.facebook.com/EOTours/videos/655240825049314/

I spoke with our tour company, *Educational Opportunities* (EO) on Friday, April 24th. If we register with the "normal" schedule and a COVID complication arises, the company will work to <u>either</u>:

1) Reschedule our trip to the following year (or an agreed upon date within 24 months)

HOLY LAND continued on p.11

Live Streaming System Underway

Since March 22nd we have been live streaming a Sunday morning worship service on Facebook using Facebook Live technology. This is currently being done with an iPhone and a tripod over the Wi-Fi network in our Sanctuary building. We intend to continue to live stream

LIVE STREAMING continued on p.13

A Message From the Finance Team

As you know due to the COVID-19 lives have been turned around for all of us. We are not able to have church services as we have been Our church has adjusted with accustomed. streaming services on-line via Face Book and Bible Study via Zoom. If you have not been able to connect to these and would like to, please call the church and leave a message. We have some members who are knowledgeable on how to get connected, one of these individuals will get back with you to offer assistance. The other issue we have is with our income. As you might expect the income overall has been reduced. We are asking everyone to give as you are able. You may send payment through Vanco, your bank, or send a check via USPS to help the church maintain current status on our expenses.

Peace to you all during these times of social distancing.

Ron King, Financial Secretary

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JESUS' ROCK STAR CORNER

Submitted by Carolyn Smith

The children have not been able to join together, but that has not stopped us from being together. We meet each Sunday morning via Zoom.

We explored many different phases of Jesus' life during the Lent season. Several days before Sunday school class, the children received a surprise package. They were allowed to look, feel, shake, smell, and listen but could not open the box. This was all in preparation to help them understand the temptation that the devil put Jesus through in the desert.



The children read bible verses.

As we prepared for Palm Sunday, the children had homework. They made palms leaves and the donkey for Jesus.





Easter Sunday came, and we watched CBN Superbook's video, "He is Risen". Afterward, we discussed the video and shared our Easter Baskets.

Sunday School is a fun way to be with our friends and learn about the life Jesus wants for us. Please join us via Zoom Sunday mornings at 9:00 am. Email Carolyn Smith, carolynsmith2215@gmail.com, for an invitation to join.



A Child's Haven Happenings

By Lesley Foyt, Director

A Child's Haven is very sad to announce that we will not be returning this school year. We really miss seeing the sweet kiddos and their families. Although it has been hard, we know the closure is necessary to protect

the health of our staff and families. Our teachers have been staying in touch with their classes and sending learning activities to do at home. The older classes have been doing some virtual Zoom meetings as well. As of now, A Child's Haven plans to resume classes for the fall semester on August 17, 2020. I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy during this time and hopefully staying connected with family and friends. We will see you in the fall!

Blessings,

Lesley



Application Submitted, Relief Uncertain

Submitted by Walter Wilson

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church has applied for aid under the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The Paycheck Protection Program provides a

method for small businesses -including churches and non-profits - with fewer than 501 employees to receive SBA loans of up to 2.5 times monthly payroll. (For us \$11,128 x 2.5 = \$27,820) The loan is forgivable (doesn't have to be paid back) if certain conditions are met regarding the use of funds to continue employment. After reading the publicly available information and information provided by the Conference, a committee met over the days from April 2 to April 6 to consider the best use of the available programs, determine our eligibility and amounts, and attempt to complete application. After several attempts we were able to file an application through the Regions Bank website on Monday, April 6 (the first day that Regions was accepting applications).

Since that date: On Thursday, April 16, Bloomberg, the Wall Street Journal and other news outlets began to report that the funds for the Paycheck Protection Program had been exhausted. There was initially some confusion as to whether this meant that all possible loans had been funded, or only that funds had been reserved by banks at the SBA. By Saturday, April 18, the Wall St. Journal was reporting that the limit had been reached in funded loans and that, unless the Congress voted more money, there would be no more. While this does not bode well for our prospects, we have not withdrawn our application, we continue to monitor the application portal, and hope to be included if there is delayed funding or if Congress votes additional funding.

BE LIGHT YOUTH May 2020

Submitted by Pastor Suzette Thorpe Johnson

YOUTH are still YOUTH even in the midst of the COVID 19 lock-down. They are completing the school year on-line and have missed prom but are still taking AP tests, and auditioning for artistic endeavors for the coming year. Our seniors are in limbo about graduation ceremonies and what college will look like in the fall. They are remarkable humans adapting, grieving and enduring. Please lift each of them in prayers.

In Midweek Manna, we simply hang-out via zoom. Share silliness and seriousness-however we are feeling. Sometimes there is a shared video link.

YOUTH worship continues our exploration of both the Holy Land destinations with matching scriptures or understanding this God thing. After music, prayer and conversation we shift to fun group on-line activities. Jett is now our master of electronic fun.

Confirmation

HOLY LAND 2021 is still happening. Our YOUTH are in need of OUTSIDE jobs to keep moving towards take-off next March. Please contact <u>Suzette@cpfumc.org</u> to arrange jobs.

Jett and Jozi have taken over mowing for Cilla while she is in rehab. Other possible tasks for our YOUTH include: weeding and prepping gardens/mulching

- washing outdoor windows
- deck staining
- power-washing your home exterior.



LOOKING FORWARD:

SAVE THE DATE: Eagle Pass Mission Trip Labor day weekend - September 5-7th (leaving after school on Friday, Sept 4 to drive to Eagle Pass. Work Sat/Sun finish and return on Monday Sept 7th early afternoon). We will serve with Mission Border Hope once more on an individual's home. Cost per person \$150

YOUTH NEWS continued from p. 4



UMARMY Update from Jenny Monahan, Regional Director:

U.M. ARMY Re-imagined! The U.M. ARMY Staff and Board Members have been working for quite a while to ensure that you will still have a mission opportunity this summer. We believe God is still calling U.M. ARMY-and you, into the mission field this summer and beyond. It will look and feel different than previous U.M. ARMY experiences, but the need is different this year than in previous years. So, we are still answering God's call "All In" together. (Romans 12:3-8)

U.M. ARMY is excited to announce the creation of *U.M. ARMY Home* and *U.M. ARMY Local*.

Due to the COVID -19 pandemic, and until National, State, and Local entities allow us to operate our traditional camp model, these will be our summer offerings for 2020.

You can still sing along. You can still see your friends. You can still learn, worship, and explore your faith. You can still help others. You can still write in your journal. You will still be on a work team. You will still have a "color". You will still have chores. You will still build relationships with those you serve.

So – what is changing? You will do more of this in the safety of your home utilizing technology for common experiences. You will work safely within your community. We will still meet to worship, you will have ideas on how to help others, you will continue to be supported.

GOD IS IN CONTROL – let's see what God has Re-imagined for us this year – are you ALL IN?

Shawn and I will be in conversation about which UMARMY experience they are offering will make sense for our YOUTH this year and contact the YOUTH directly once we have decided in the next week or so. Look for updates in the Happenings on Wednesday and in church announcements on Sunday mornings. It will still be the week of June 7th.

Whew – that is a lot. Like I said at the start, the YOUTH are still YOUTH pandemic or not – they are being LIGHT in the midst of everyday.

Peace.

Pastor Suzette

Summer VBS and Safe Gatherings

Submitted by Carolyn Smith

Our Texas governor has canceled schools for the remainder of this 19-20 school year. With the uncertainty of when we will be able to assemble again, the 2020 MEGA Sports VBS is canceled. We will reevaluate the situation in the next few months. When we are allowed to gather again, we will consider having a more traditional VBS. Hopefully, this will take place on a Saturday before the 20-21 school year starts.

Some of you have postponed renewing your Safe Gatherings certification. Now is a great time to renew while we are not in a rush. If you have not received your renewal email, please go to www.safegatherings.com to start the process. If you have any questions, please reach out to Carolyn Smith or Jane Howard.

Zoom Online Training

Take advantage of the Zoom online training videos to familiarize yourself with the user interface. These are short (about 1 minute) training videos. All of these are at the Zoom Help Center:

- Getting Started
- Getting Started on Windows and Mac
- Getting Started with iOS
- Getting Started with Android
- Zoom Web Client

Notes for Happier Video Conferencing

Once you have connected to your video conference, here are some guidelines to make the experience better for you and the other participants:

- 1. **Mute your mic** unless you are going to speak. While your mic is muted, you can use your keyboard space bar as a "Push to Talk" switch, if you are using a keyboard. Unmute when you want to talk. This is especially important if you are connecting from a noisy environment. Find a quiet place.
- 2. Arrange your camera so that it is not looking at a bright background behind you such as a window or overhead light. Find a spot where the light is from the side or, preferably, from in front of you.
- 3. Point your camera at yourself and not at the ceiling or the floor. Duh! This may require propping your smartphone up vertically in front of you with a few books or something else.

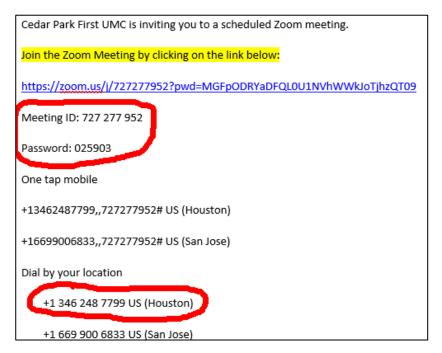
How to Join a Zoom Video Conference Call with Your Device

Our church is now using Zoom video conferencing technology for church meetings, Sunday School classes and weekday classes. Here is how you can participate depending on the type of device(s) you have at your house. You must have access to email to receive the invitation to the conference call, but beyond this, all you need is a plain old telephone at the minimum. If you have a device with a camera and microphone, you can enjoy the full experience of video conferencing.

By Regular Telephone

Contact the meeting leader to make sure they have your email address to send you the meeting invitation. Receive the invitation by email from the meeting leader. Note the dial-in phone numbers down near the bottom of the email. The Houston phone number is best for our area. At the date and time of the meeting, dial the Houston number and connect to the meeting in

audio-only mode: You will be asked to enter the Meeting ID followed by the # sign. Then you will be asked to enter a participant number, followed by a # sign. Just enter a # sign, because we don't use participant numbers. Finally, you will be asked to enter the Password followed by the # sign. Once you do that, you will enter the "Waiting Room" for the meeting. The meeting organizer will admit you to the meeting. You will not be able to see the other participants, but you will be able to hear them and they will be able to hear you. This is like an oldtime conference call.



By Smartphone or Tablet

Contact the meeting leader to make sure they have your email address to send you the meeting invitation. Receive the invitation by email from the meeting leader. Prepare your smartphone or tablet by getting the free Zoom app for your device from either the Apple App Store, or Google Play. You must have an account to access and install the Zoom app from the App Store, so make sure you have your login credentials for that (ID and password) or set up a new account for yourself. It's free. When the day and time of the meeting arrives, start your Zoom app.

ZOOM HELP continued

Enter your name and the Meeting ID and Password that you received in the email (below) to join the meeting. Select Video On if prompted. Once you do that, you will enter the "Waiting Room" for the meeting. The meeting organizer will admit you to the meeting. You will then join the meeting with both audio and video enabled. You should be able to see and hear other participants and they should be able to see and hear you. Make sure and point your device camera at your face so we can see you. Try to avoid a location where there are bright lights behind you from a window or indoor light.

Cedar Park First UMC is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join the Zoom Meeting by clicking on the link below:

https://zoom.us/i/727277952?pwd=MGFpODRYaDFQL0U1NVhWWkJoTjhzQT09

Meeting ID: 727 277 952

Password: 025903

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,727277952# US (Houston)

+16699006833,,727277952# US (San Jose)

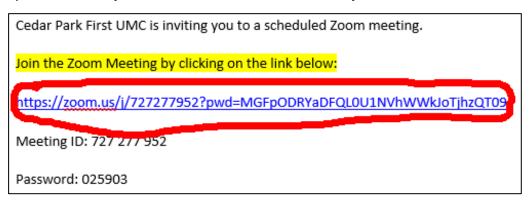
Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

By Desktop/Laptop Computer with Installed Microphone & Camera

Contact the meeting leader to make sure they have your email address to send you the meeting invitation. Receive the invitation by email from the meeting leader. When the day and time of the meeting arrives, click on the blue link in the email you received from the meeting leader. Select Video On if prompted. Once you do that, you will enter the "Waiting Room" for the meeting. The meeting organizer will admit you to the meeting. You will then join the meeting with both audio and video enabled. You should be able to see and hear other participants and they should be able to see and hear you.



By Desktop/Laptop Computer Computer without Microphone & Camera

First, you need to *upgrade* your system to add a microphone and video camera. The easiest way to do this is to purchase and install a webcam. A webcam is a device which contains both a microphone and a video camera. It usually plugs in to a USB port on your desktop computer

ZOOM HELP continued on next page

ZOOM HELP continued

or laptop and does not require a separate power cable. They cost between \$20 and \$200 depending in features and construction. See the article below about *Home Video Conferencing Hardware Selection & Installation* for more information on webcams.

Once your webcam is installed, contact the meeting leader to make sure they have your email address to send you the meeting invitation. Receive the invitation by email from the meeting leader. When the day and time of the meeting arrives, click on the blue link in the email you received from the meeting leader.

Select Video On if prompted. Once you do that, you will enter the "Waiting Room" for the meeting. The meeting organizer will admit you to the meeting. You will then join the meeting with both audio and video enabled. You should be able to see and hear other participants and they should be able to see and hear you.

Home Video Conferencing Hardware Selection & Installation

Requirements

Your home computer (desktop or laptop) must have the following available to do video conferencing:

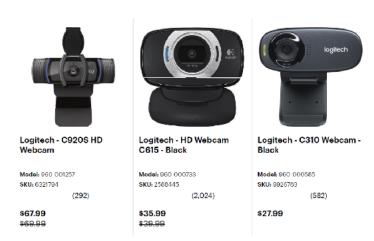
- 1. Internet Access (at least 4MB/s bandwidth. The more the better.)
- 2. Home desktop computer or a laptop with an available USB port.
- 3. Speakers connected to your desktop or integrated as part of your laptop computer
- 4. Video camera (this may be embedded in the lid of your laptop)
- 5. Microphone (this may be separate or combined with your video camera = webcam) or embedded in your laptop.

Webcam Options

Separate webcams suitable for video conferencing range in price from \$20 to \$200 depending on resolution and frame rates. A decent camera should do at least 720p (1280 x 720 pixels) and 30 frames per second (fps). Webcams are currently in short supply during the coronavirus pandemic as demand has outstripped supply and the majority are

assembled in China. Some pricegouging is present, so check the MSRP carefully before you purchase.

A recommended specification is a webcam with Full HD capability (1920x1080) and 30fps. A webcam like this should cost around \$70; any of the options below from Logitech should perform just fine. Logitech is a reputable vendor. Before the pandemic, their cameras used to be widely available



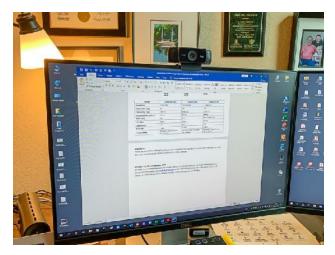
HARDWARE continued

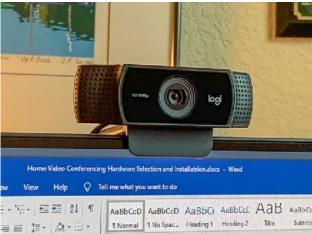
(Walmart, Best Buy, Target, Amazon). Now (21Mar20) they are hard to find as demand has overwhelmed supply. Prices are from Best Buy. Other vendors prices are comparable. Currently, come vendors are price-gouging, so check around before you buy.

Model	Logitech C920S	Logitech C615	Logitech C310
Resolution	1920x1080	1920x1080	1280x720
Frame Rate (fps)	30	30	30
Connection Type	USB 3.0	USB 2.0	USB 2.0
Integrated Microphone	Stereo	Mono	Mono
Auto focus	Yes	Yes	No – fixed focus
Lens type	Glass	Glass	Plastic
Cable length	5 ft	3 ft	5 ft
Warranty	2-year	2-year	2-year
Compatibility	Windows, Mac, Chrome OS, Android	Windows, Mac, Chrome OS, Android	Windows, Mac, Chrome OS, Android

Installation

These webcams have a bracket so they can be installed on the top edge of your monitor or old laptop. Then plug the cable into an open USB port on your computer using the USB cable built-in to the webcam.





For Window 10 machines, the hardware drivers will install automatically once the webcam is plugged in to the USB port. You are now ready for video conferencing!

CPFUMC Friends and Members Only

CPFUMC is providing personalized consultation, purchase, delivery, installation and basic training service for webcams. Contact Neil Howard at nhowardtx@gmail.com or 512-720-1990 for details. Basically, you just pay for the camera and Neil will try to purchase, deliver, install and train you how to use it for free.

HOLY LAND continued from p. 1

OR

- 2) refund our money for our trip (NOTE: airlines are the only ones who can refund the plane tickets once booked 60 days prior to trip however, we should have a clear idea 60 days prior to our trip if it will go forward and, if not, the travel company would not purchase the tickets at that point and refund us our funds completely).
- 3) NOTE also that the *optional travel insurance* does not cover a COVID pandemic, however, if our trip does not go forward EO will refund the travel insurance cost along with the trip funds since we are not using it.

Bottom line: We register. We keep working towards our fabulous trip. If the pandemic resurges for whatever reason, then we either wait for a later time or withdraw from the trip.

Here is the link to our specific trip brochure for March 2021:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p1E3N3zLkOjU0027YvehUogZo6koI2P-/view

Our first initial registration is officially May 13th with a \$100 deposit. The company is waving late fees for late registration or payments. All accounts are to be paid in full by Dec 27th. The next payment is due in September however, once you have established registration, you may make payments as fits your budget so long as you are paid in full by the last due date. YOUTH parents please contact me directly about HL2021 accounts.

For those registering in May: print out the last page of the brochure. Fill out and mail with deposit. **Email me when done!**

Your Tour Information

Your Tour Host ID: 60128

Your Tour: Holy Land Tour Cedar Park UMC- Rev Suzette Thorpe Johnson

Your Tour Code: HL21

Your Departure Date: 031321T

THIS IS GOING TO BE FABULOUS!! I cannot wait to explore this most profoundly sacred land with YOU.

Peace, Pastor Suzette



CPFUMC Closed Through May

Dear Church Members,

Has this been a discovery time for you? I have discovered many things about myself and others during this "Stay at Home" time. First, I don't like it. While grumbling about it, I ask myself, how would I feel if one of my family members got sick because I would not stay at home?

We may not be family by blood, but we are family by choice. The church council has met and voted to keep CPFUMC closed for May. While wanting to protect our family, the council feels this is the safest choice for everyone. The church council will reevaluate this at their May meeting.

If you need something during this time, please reach out to our pastors by phone or email. We are trying to maintain things as usual. Sunday service will continue through Facebook Live Streaming, Pastor Peter continues his prayer time, bible and book studies via Zoom, and Pastor Suzette is reaching out Monday through Thursday by Facebook. If you have not seen some of her productions, please check them out.

Are you able to view the services through Facebook? If you need help with how to use your equipment or the program, please reach out to Carolyn Smith, Walter Wilson, or Neil Howard we may be able to help.

Looking forward to when we can meet again. Until then "Stay at Home", "Stay Well", and "Stay Safe".

Carolyn Smith

CPFUMC Council Chair

Church Contacts

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 Carolyn Smith
Music Director/Pianist Jodi Blount
Children's Haven Director Lesley Foyt
Newsletter Editor Jill Lundstrom

peter@cpfumc.org suzette@cpfumc.org carolynsmith2215@gmail.com jodi_blount@hotmail.com director@childshaven.net lund121@me.com

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

LIVE STREAMING continued from p. 1

worship services even after the pandemic has passed. To do this we need a more robust and reliable system. A Live Streaming Team (Neil Howard, Sergio Longoria, Todd Greer, Hardy Porterfield and Dean Feazell) has been working on this for several weeks. The work so far has been to understand the technology, identify any new equipment and facility changes required, gather the equipment, then test and build out the system.

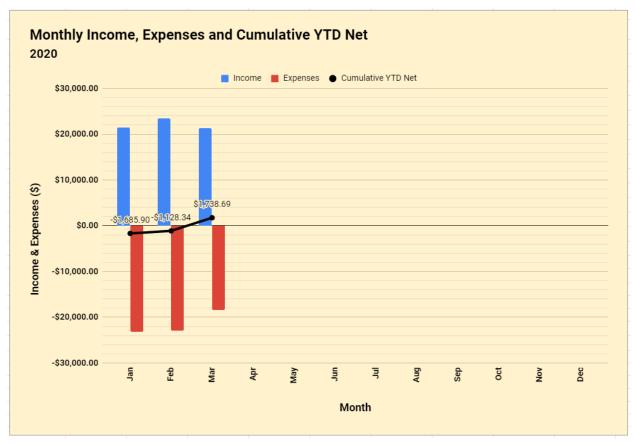


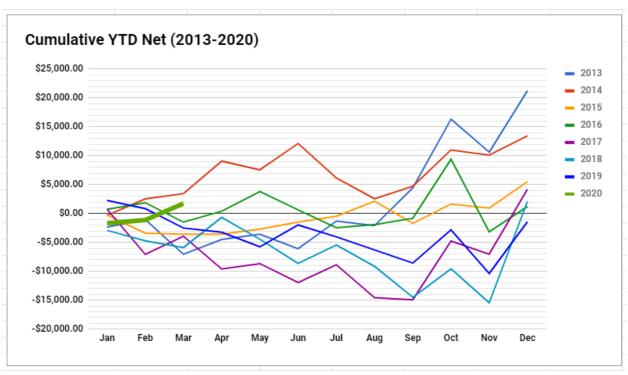
So far, we have made significant headway understanding the technology and identifying and gathering the equipment. Through several equipment donations (cameras, cables, tripod, computer and monitors, etc.) and purchase of a video switch and video capture device (\$295), we are now at the point of beginning to test a more robust live streaming system.

Installation of a robust live streaming system will require some additional power equipment, audio-visual wiring in the Sanctuary attic and walls along with construction of a sound booth in the rear against the east wall. The bookshelf AV station in the right front corner near the altar platform would be removed and all its equipment (computer, powered mixer and microphones) transferred to the sound booth at the rear. We have a design for the sound booth and have estimated the remaining cost at \$2,293, assuming that we build the sound booth ourselves. If we add a second camera station on the south wall of the sanctuary, the remaining cost is \$3,243. Of course, this is an unbudgeted expense, so we are still figuring out a way to pay for this. Contributions to "Live Streaming System" are always welcomed.

We hope to engage members of the congregation with carpentry and building skills to help construct the sound booth. If you have experience or skills to contribute to this effort, or if you would like to support use of this system by becoming a live streaming technician, please contact Neil Howard or Sergio Longoria to join the team!

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church Financial Information January-March 2020





CPFUMC Calendar May 2020. Click here to go to the online

9am Children's Sunday S. 12:30pm Stories and Joke 9:30am Prayer 12:30pm Stories and Joke 12:30pm Stories and Joke 6:30pm Alcoholics Anonyn 5pm ACH Spring Fundrais
12:30pm Stories and Joke
9am Children's Sunday Si 12:30pm Stories and Joke 13:30pm Stories and Joke 12:30pm Stories and Joke 13:30pm Stories and Joke 14:30pm Stories and Joke 14:30pm Stories and Joke 14:30pm Stories and Joke 13:30pm AA Men's Group 3pm YOUTH Midweek Mai 4pm Tea Time w/Pastor S 5pm GS #40530
9am Children's Sunday Si 12:30pm Stories and Joke 9:30am Morning Prayer St 12pm The Pilgrim Journey 9:30am Tai Chi - Intro 10am Online Worship 2:15pm ESL - GED - Comi 10am Bible Study 12:30pm Stories and Joke 10am Children's Chapel 10am Children's Chapel 11am Tai Tai Chi Beginners 12am Tai Chi Beginners 13am Tai Chi Beginners 14am Youth 3:30pm FINANCE Commit 7:30pm AA Men's Group 8pm YOUTH Midweek Mai 12:30pm Stories and Joke 4pm Tea Time w/Pastor S
9am Children's Sunday Si 12:30pm Stories and Joke 9:30am Morning Prayer Si 9:30am Mbrship Nurture/C 9:30am Tai Chi - Intro 10am Online Worship 4pm Tea Time w/Pastor Si 10am Bible Study 12:30pm Stories and Joke 12:30pm Sto
94 Children's Sunday Si 12:30pm Stories and Joke 9:30am Morning Prayer St 12:30pm Stories and Joke 9:30am Tai Chi - Intro 110am Online Worship 4pm Tea Time w/Pastor 5 10am Bible Study 6:30pm Buckles and Bows 10am Children's Chapel 12:30pm Stories and Joke 8pm YOUTH Midweek Mai 11am Tai Chi Beginners 12:30pm AA Men's Group 4pm Youth 4pm Tea Time w/Pastor
9am Children's Sunday Si 12:30pm Stories and Joke 9:30am Morning Prayer Si 1pm Easy Line Dancing 9:30am Tai Chi - Intro 10am Online Worship 4pm Tea Time w/Pastor 5 10am Bible Study 6:30pm Buckles and Bows 10am Children's Chapel 1pm 1st, 2nd, 3rd JOHN 16:30pm TRUSTEES 11am Prayer Shawl Minist 8pm YOUTH Midweek Mai 11am Tai Chi Beginners 4pm Youth 4pm Tea Time w/Pastor