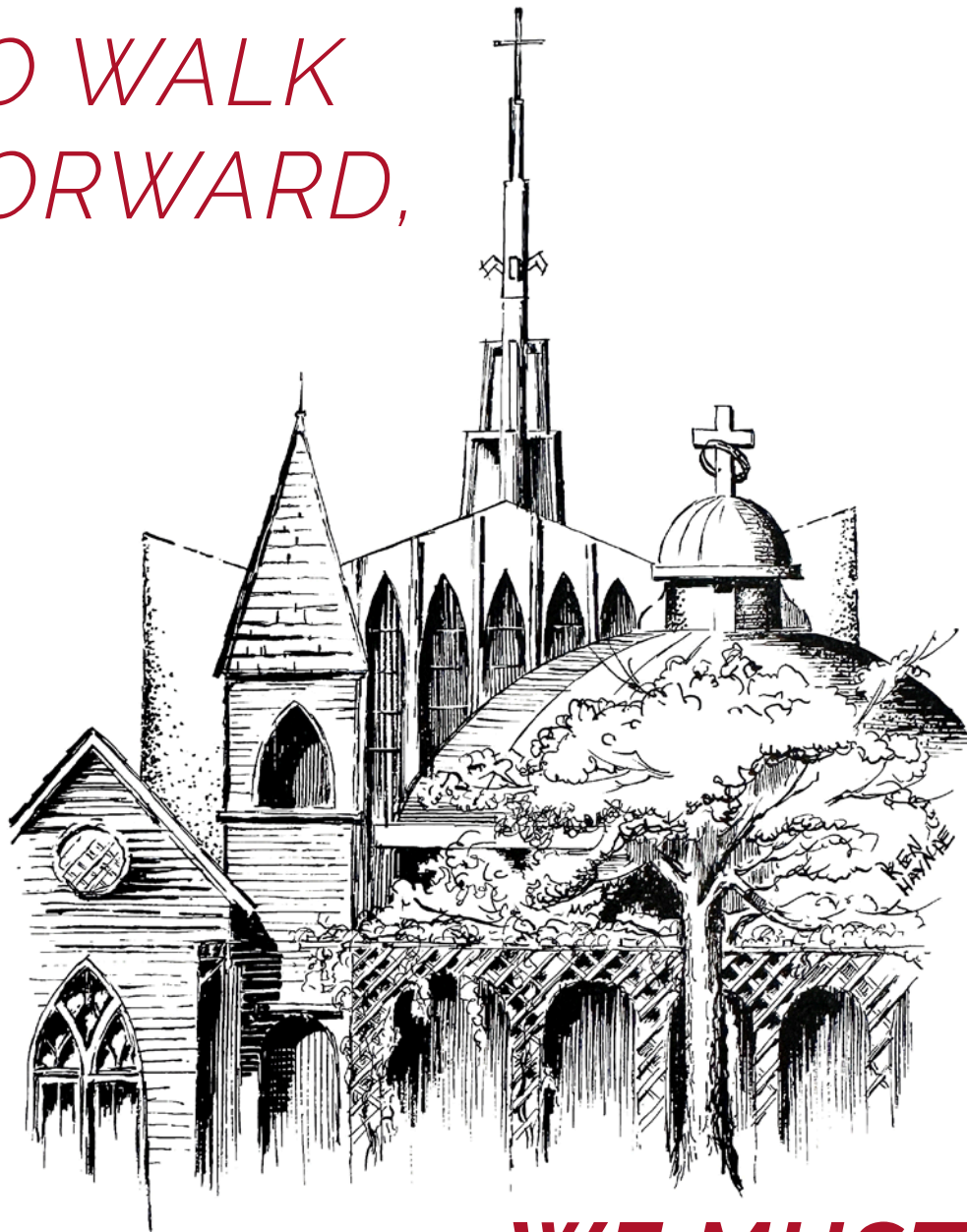


*in*SPIRE

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH BEAUMONT NEWSLETTER • NOVEMBER 2023



*TO WALK
FORWARD,*



***WE MUST
LOOK BEHIND.***

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A letter from PASTOR JEREMY WESTER

Greetings!

It is difficult to believe that November 1st marks the start of my 5th month here at FUMC Beaumont. It feels like the first four months have gone by in the blink of an eye. It also feels like I must have been here for closer to four years given how much has happened. I remain amazed at the sense of hope that I keep encountering in almost everything we do. I am confident that the work we are beginning now will help us lay a solid foundation for what God does in and through this congregation for generations to come! A few highlights:

- We were blessed to welcome 3 of our young people into church membership through confirmation on October 15th!
- We had more than a dozen people show up to be trained as a mentor for the Jefferson County reVision program that will soon find a home in our facility.
- Trunk or Treat was a joy as we teamed up with our community to bless the families of and around Charlton Pollard Elementary.
- Our Trustees are hard at work with new lights, new signs, new doors, two new AC units, and a new alarm system either installed or in progress (with much more in the works).
- The Leadership Task Force is finalizing drafts of the resolution that we'll consider on December 4th to streamline our administrative decision making process.
- Our Light in the Dark series will provide space for us to reflect on our past and begin to look forward toward all that God will do (see inside for more details).
- We're working with a new non-profit, begun by a church member, called "We See You." To date, we've provided over 600 Sunday afternoon meals to our unhoused neighbors.

I pray that as we continue to talk about the blessings of our past that have brought us here and as we experiment with new ideas and ministries going forward, we would all find our place in the work that God continues to do in and through us. Please don't ever hesitate to reach out with concerns or questions about all that is happening!

Pastor Jeremy

Rev. Jeremy Wester, Lead Pastor



COMMUNION RAIL OFFERING

November 5, 2023

Some Other Place

November 19, 2023

Rainbow Room

December 3, 2023

Seafarer's Center

December 17, 2023

Providence Place in San Antonio

FINANCE COMMITTEE

As we reach the end of FY 2023, the Finance Committee has approved the commission of an audit of our financial records and procedures. In accordance with the Book of Discipline's recommendation, an outside firm will conduct the audit to ensure everything is in order for our next group of leaders.

LEADERSHIP TASK FORCE

As the Leadership Task Force nears the completion of its work, we want to make sure two dates are at the front of mind.

November 19th, we'll host a Town Hall and Potluck after worship to review the final Resolution and hear a final presentation from the Task Force.

Monday December 4th at 6pm there will be a Church Conference vote on the final Resolution.

For current drafts of the documents and more ways to participate or learn, go to our new Pastor's Blog at fumcbeaumont.org/pastorsblog



Congratulations Confirmands

On Sunday, October 15, our confirmands were welcomed into the life of our church. From left – Jackson Frantz, Charleston Crenshaw, and Shelby Boutte.

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY – NOVEMBER 5

November 5 is our annual celebration of All Saints Sunday, when we remember by name those members of our congregation who have entered the Church Triumphant in the last year. We also celebrate the communion of the saints as we partake of Holy Communion, when we feast with past, present and even future disciples of Christ. The faith community stretches beyond space and time. In the sacrament, we commune with Christians around the world, the faithful who came before us, the faithful in our congregation, and the faithful believers who will follow us.

This year we will remember with joy and gratitude these saints of FUMC:

Charles Curtis Smith
 William Byrd "Bill" Hataway
 Nadine May "De" Hester
 John Howard Williams
 Kathleen "Kathy" Walker Green

Vita Weir
 Marion Jean Boernke Sprawls
 Jean Louise Adkinson Lindsey
 Carol Martha Halder Hamm
 Glen F. Moon

In preparation for Communion, each person who wishes will be given a card on which to write the name(s) of a friend or loved one whom you wish to remember from years past or from other churches. As we come forward to receive Communion, you may place that card on a table to signify that person's presence in the communion of saints. The Book of Remembrance will also be on the altar for you to write the names of others whom you wish to remember but who have not been celebrated by name that morning.

UPDATED ONLINE GIVING

This month we will be fully making the switch to our new online giving platform – Church Center Giving and closing out our Easy Tithe account. Be sure to set up an online account for recurring or one time donations to support the ministries of the church! **To find out more about making the switch and create your donation account visit fumcbeaumont.org/give**

SMALL GATHERINGS WITH THE WESTERS

Pastor Jeremy and Sallie want to meet you over coffee, lunch or dinner. We will go deeper in the town hall conversations and would love to hear your history with the congregation.

If you are interested in hosting or attending a small get-together, please contact Robin Snoek 409-926-8511.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE – SPRING 2024 SEMESTER – DUE NOV. 30

The First United Methodist Church, Beaumont, College Scholarships are available to members of First UMC who are enrolled in post-secondary education affiliated with a college and taking at least 12 undergraduate or 9 graduate credit hours. Go to fumcbeaumont.org/scholarship for a PDF application or pick one up at the church office. **Completed applications with all appropriate documentation are due the Board of Trustees Scholarship Committee by November 30, 2023, and may be returned to the church office, Board of Trustees Mailbox.**

WEEKLY RHYTHMS

SUNDAYS

Sunday School
9:45 a.m.

Family Worship Service
11 a.m.
In-Person & Livestream

Small Group with Robin & Charlie Snok
6-7 p.m.

MONDAYS

Narcotics Anonymous Meeting
7 - 8:30 p.m.

TUESDAYS

Connect Group with Liza Nelson
Noon

Zoom Small Group
7 p.m. | Contact Gail Wilson

WEDNESDAYS

Light in the Dark Study with Pastor Jeremy
Noon | Library | Nov. 8 - Dec. 21

Chancel Choir Practice
6 p.m.

Narcotics Anonymous Meeting
7 - 8:30 p.m.

THURSDAYS

Handchime Practice
10 a.m.

STAY CONNECTED

 @fumcbeaumont

 @fumcbeaumont

 First UMC Beaumont

 fumcbeaumont.org

 (409) 920-PRAY

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER DATES TO KNOW


NOVEMBER

SUN., NOVEMBER 5


Daylight Savings Time Ends
On Sunday, Nov. 5 at 2 a.m. local time, our clocks will go back an hour and we will gain an hour of sleep.

 **All Saints Day**
11 a.m. Family Worship


MON., NOVEMBER 6

 **Mission & Ministry Brainstorm Meeting**
6 p.m. | Everyone is invited to join as we continue our conversations regarding mission and ministry ideas that are in process or that we'd love to see get started. We welcome new ideas and volunteers, or anyone curious about how we can better serve each other and our city. Charlie Snok will facilitate the conversation.

WED., NOVEMBER 8

 **Games Day**
10 a.m. | Fun & Fellowship.
Contact Ruby Nelson

SAT., NOVEMBER 11

 **SHP Bed Build**
8:30 a.m. - noon | 2950 Milam Street, Bmt., TX
Pre register at bit.ly/shpevent


SUN., NOVEMBER 12

 **Beaumont Interfaith Concert**
3 pm | Sanctuary

WED., NOVEMBER 15

December Spire Deadline
Please send your December newsletter content to erika@fumcbeaumont.org before Nov. 15 to be published.


THU., NOVEMBER 16


 **Last Day to Give -**
SOP Thanksgiving Store Food Drive

FRI., NOVEMBER 17

 **Some Other Place Service Day**
8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

SAT., NOVEMBER 18

 **Second Saturday Faith Seminar**
Parlor (Faith Questers) | 9 a.m. - Noon
(Rescheduled from Sat., 11/11)

 **SHP Delivery Day**
9 a.m. - Noon
2950 Milam Street, Bmt., TX
Bring your cordless drill with charged up batteries.

SUN., NOVEMBER 19

 **FUMC Town Hall Meeting**
Potluck Lunch in Rothwell Hall | After Worship

St. James UMC Church Anniversary
3 p.m. | St. James United Methodist Church
2485 Blanchette St, Beaumont, TX 77701
Pastor Julius Wardley welcomes us to celebrate the 148th Anniversary of St. James UMC Beaumont!

MON., NOVEMBER 20

 **Chancel Choir Practice**
6 p.m.

TUE., NOVEMBER 21

United Women in Faith - UMW
6 p.m. | Rothwell Hall

THU., NOVEMBER 23

Thanksgiving Day
Church office closed November 22 (half day),
November 23, & November 24.

SAT., NOVEMBER 25

Kairos Family Supper

Rothwell Hall

Set up: 2 – 5 p.m.

Serving: 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Clean up: 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

MON., NOVEMBER 27

Board of Trustees & Finance Joint Meeting

6 p.m. | Library

THU., NOVEMBER 30

FUMC College Scholarship Applications Due – Spring 2023 Semester

Church Office | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Please return to the Board of Trustees Mailbox.

DECEMBER

SUN., DECEMBER 3

Arts & Community –

Painting with Inez Alvares

Before and after 11 a.m. Worship

First Family Gathering – Making Advent Wreaths

2 p.m.

MON., DECEMBER 4

Church Conference Vote on New Leadership Structure

6 p.m. | All church members are invited to come with a voice and vote on our new leadership structure.

SAT., DECEMBER 9

SHP Bed Build

8:30 a.m. - noon | 2950 Milam Street, Bmt., TX

Pre register at bit.ly/shpevent

Second Saturday Faith Seminar

Parlor (Faith Questers) | 9 a.m. - Noon

SUN., DECEMBER 10

Breakfast with Santa

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | Rothwell Hall

First Family Gathering – Feeding Our Neighbors

Preparing – 2 p.m. - 3 p.m. | Serving – 3 p.m.

Gather with Scott Gittinger as we prepare food for our neighbors.

TUE., DECEMBER 12

Giving Tree Gifts Due

Please return your fulfilled giving tree tags before 12/12 to First UMC Beaumont.

WED., DECEMBER 13

Games Day

10 a.m. | Fun & Fellowship.

Contact Ruby Nelson

FRI., DECEMBER 15

Some Other Place Service Day

8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

SAT., DECEMBER 16

SHP Delivery Day

9 a.m. - Noon | 2950 Milam Street, Bmt., TX

Bring your cordless drill with charged up batteries.

First UMC Choir Concert – JOY! Light Dawns

7 pm | Sanctuary

A sharing of the Light of Christmas to benefit Sleep in Heavenly Peace by the FUMC Beaumont Chancel Choir and friends.

SUN., DECEMBER 17

First Family Gathering – Caroling to Our Homebound Church Family

Meet at 2 p.m. at the church

Poinsettia Orders Due

Order online at fumcbeaumont.org/poinsettias or with an order form.

TUE., DECEMBER 19

United Women in Faith – UMW

6 p.m. | Rothwell Hall

SAT., DECEMBER 23

Kairos Family Supper

Rothwell Hall

Set up: 2 – 5 p.m.

Serving: 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Clean up: 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

SUN., DECEMBER 24

Sunday Worship Service

Early Time! – 10 a.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

4 p.m.

MON., DECEMBER 25

Christmas Day

Church office closed December 25 – January 1.

SUN., DECEMBER 31

New Years Eve

Sunday Worship Service

Early Time! – 10 a.m.

MON., JANUARY 1, 2024

New Years Day

Church Office Closed

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

Thanksgiving

November 22, (half day)

November 23, & November 24

Office reopens November 27

Christmas to New Years Day

December 25 – January 1

Office open by appointment only.

Office reopens January 2



Anthony's Story

PART 2 – BY SCOTT GITTINGER

This is a continuation of Anthony's Story from the October 2023 newsletter.

We are pleased to continue our story about Anthony Salvato. Recapping the first article, Anthony is a highly educated individual, holding a master's in history, was teaching at Lamar University, and is an aspiring artist. His slide into being unhoused began with the loss of his teaching position at the university, which has led to a 12-year period of homelessness, living on and off the streets of Beaumont.

It is difficult to understand why someone would tolerate or settle for this type of lifestyle. But you must look at the different aspects of the individual's life. I'd like to stress the use of "individual" in this case, because often people with mental illness are grouped together and characterized by specific diagnoses. This is due to a system that is severely overcrowded. Unless a person has access to private health care, they are at the mercy of states that make funding of mental illness a political debate; and a federal government that can't adequately fund or issue a doctrine over our 330 million residents that is effective or healing. Due to the lack of public funding, this creates a "come one-come all" approach where medicines are not monitored or tailored to the individual, but rather some level of "generic public care" executed by an extremely overworked care team. This hit or miss result offers a subprime result which prevents an individual from truly being able to grow and heal out of their current situation.

The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute research found "approximately 70 percent of youth

in the juvenile justice system have a diagnosable mental health disorder; of those youth, over 60 percent also suffer a substance abuse disorder. It is estimated that 34 percent of the inmate population in Texas have mental health disorders. Youth and adults in our criminal justice system are not the only concern.

Texas is home to 17 million veterans and approximately eight percent experience severe mental health and substance abuse needs, putting veterans with inadequate access to care at higher risk of contact with the criminal justice system. When you consider that one-half of all mental illnesses begin by age 14, and that adults with untreated mental health conditions are eight times more likely to be incarcerated than the general population, earlier screening and intervention need to be part of a comprehensive, integrated primary and behavioral health care system in Texas."

These numbers show us that it is imperative to re-evaluate our treatment of mental health disorders before an individual ends up incarcerated. Additionally, recent findings suggest that between 50 - 63 percent of inmates in Texas prisons have drug or alcohol dependency or abuse issues. Since both mental health and addiction issues often go untreated, these individuals typically find their way into the courts and prison system.

Unfortunately, this is what happened to Anthony. His mental illness diagnoses included several disorders including bi-polar, chronic

depression, and others. These diagnoses ultimately caused him to hear voices, leading him to set a fire to "eliminate the devil." These actions are what first brought him to the criminal justice system.

To deal with the daily frustrations of street living, Anthony began experimenting with numerous intoxicants in hopes to dampen the pain and loneliness. He started by using the stereotypical weekend or party drugs and before he knew it things grew out of control. Unfortunately, while writing this article, Anthony's addiction to methamphetamines brought him back to the county jail. During his scheduled probation appointment, they did a "surprise" drug test that came back positive, sending him directly back to jail.

In recent years, Anthony completed a drug treatment program called Unity in Beaumont and he did well for a while. But like so many others, he fell back into old habits. Prior to his arrest this month he was talking with authorities to go back into Unity once again in attempts to fight his addiction. He felt that this time could be different because now he has a supportive, nonjudgmental church family supporting him and loving him unconditionally. When the Unity program did not materialize, Anthony was frustrated and continued the meth use, but nowhere near previous amounts.

Here is the question to ask—since he could not get treatment in a timely manner, did he subconsciously know that testing positive at his probation appointment would get him back to jail? That this test would send him to a court mandated recovery program because he is incarcerated? Could someone be so desperate for an opportunity to change and improve their life that they would willingly get put in jail as their only access to treatment and hope for recovery?

♥ **Anthony's story continues next month...**



Last Day to Give – Thu., Nov. 16
We will be collecting donations in the boxes located in the Narthex.

- Mixed Vegetables
- Macaroni & Cheese
- Yams
- Stuffing
- Corn Bread Mix
- Chicken or Beef Broth
- Cream Mushroom / Chicken Soup
- Cranberry Sauce
- Canned Fruit
- Canned Pumpkin
- Cake Mix & Frosting
- Pie Filling
- Pie Shell

GIVING TREES

Giving trees will be coming out soon! Stay tuned for more information for a few changes to this year's program. This year's gifts will be due on December 12.

WINTER CLOTHES DRIVE LAMAR UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Let's bless the Lamar University international students with clean and gently used, warm clothes for the winter months! October 2023 - January 2024. Clothing may be dropped off at First United Methodist Church Beaumont, to be delivered to Lamar University's International Education Office.

Light in the Dark

A congregation wide journey through November and December

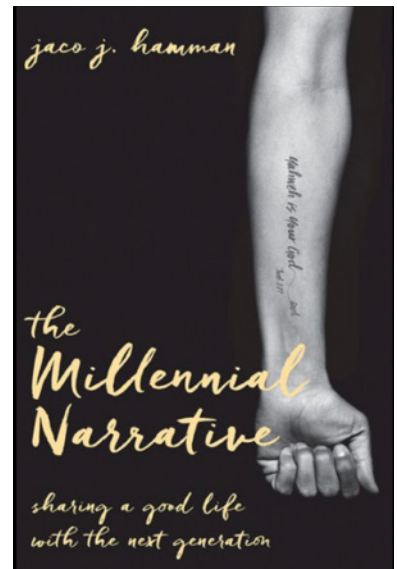
Even in the darkest moments, we find light by remembering and telling the stories of the people and places that have made us what we are. Joel tells the story of God's people going through one of the darkest seasons imaginable. As we move through the book of Joel in November and December, we will seek to name and grieve the darkness that we have faced. And we will remember and tell our stories in a way that helps us ensure the light of hope continues to shine brightly in this place for generations to come.

Beginning November 5th, every Sunday in worship will follow themes from the book of Joel as outlined in *The Millennial Narrative: Sharing a Good Life with the Next Generation* by Dr. Jaco Hamman. Many of our small groups will use this resource or its companion discussion guide to go deeper into these topics (more details below).

Since I arrived, we have talked a lot about change and what we hope for the future. It is vital that as things do start to change, we don't lose sight of the gifts of our past and what has brought us to where we are. As one of our worship songs will remind us - **"to walk forward, we must look behind."** By remembering and telling the stories that have meant so much in our past, we hope to gain a vision for the new thing that God will continue to do - a new thing that is grounded in who we have been and that provides a firm foundation for who we need to become to continue offering the heart of Christ for generations to come.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. I hope and pray that this will be a season of renewal and strength for us all!

- Pastor Jeremy



POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

\$16.50 by check, or \$17.35 by credit card online.

The deadline for reserving a plant is Sunday, December 17, 2023.

These will be placed in the sanctuary prior to Christmas Eve and may be purchased in honor or memory of a loved one.

Plants may be purchased online at fumcbeaumont.org/poinsettias or by completing the form below. Completed forms may place it in the offering plate during worship or put it in Sonya's box in the work room.

IN MEMORY OF _____

IN HONOR OF _____

DONOR(S) _____

PHONE NUMBER _____



Loving the city with the *Heart of Christ*

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH BEAUMONT



BEAUMONT INTERFAITH
CHORAL SOCIETY

PRESENTS

MAGNIFY THE LORD

Wynnelle Guidry, Conducting

Sunday, November 12, 2023 at 3PM



SOME OTHER PLACE THANKSGIVING

Store

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