

Advent Continues WITH UPUMC

3RD ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF

Sunday, Dec. 18, 5:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Bring the whole family for food and fun, and cast your votes by placing \$1 bills in each team's tip jar, all benefitting SoupMobile. We'll have pizza for all the children who haven't quite refined their chili palette. Chef Thomas from the SoupMobile will be our special guest judge. Then we'll move to the front lawn for hot chocolate and cookies and the performances of the Live Nativity. To enter your chili or cookies, e-mail Diane Swartzendruber at swartzendruber@sbcglobal.net.

LIVE NATIVITY

Sunday, Dec. 18, 6:45 & 7:15 p.m., front lawn

The youth will perform this dramatic depiction of the Nativity story, including live animals, for the entire community. Those involved in the Chili Cook-off will turn out the lights in Fellowship Hall and gather outside for everyone's favorite Christmas time tradition. Invite friends and neighbors to this fun evening. Hot chocolate and cookies will be served.

CHRISTMAS CAMP

Monday, Dec. 19, and Tuesday, Dec. 20, 9 a.m.-noon, Youth Center

Bring your children ages 3-5th grade to the UPUMC Youth Center for hours of crafts and games led by Youth & Children's Ministries while you do some last-minute shopping. Enter the Youth Center from the parking lot on the north side of the building. Cost is \$25 per child per day, and all proceeds go to SoupMobile. Registration will be limited to 125 kids per day. Register at www.upumc.org/give.

TUBA CHRISTMAS

Friday, Dec. 23, 11 a.m.

UPUMC Spiritual Arts series is sponsoring a trip to Tuba Christmas at Thanksgiving Square in downtown Dallas beginning at noon. The church bus will leave the church at 11 a.m. Contact Dick Wilson, dwilson@upumc.org, to make reservations.

CELEBRATE JESUS

Christmas Eve Morning, Saturday, Dec. 24, 8-11 a.m.

Celebrate Jesus event provides hope over the holidays (See story on page 4)

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

See back page for complete details.



SPECIAL MUSICAL PRESENTATION

Ron Nelson's majestic
The Christmas Story
Sunday, Dec. 18
11 a.m. service

The Chancel Choir, along with narrator Dan Brantley and baritone soloist Scott Scripps, will present Ron Nelson's majestic *The Christmas Story* on Sunday, Dec. 18, at the 11 a.m. worship service. The 30-minute work was written in 1958 and first performed by the choirs at Brown University and Pembroke College. The work, accompanied by 7-part brass (3 trumpets, 3 trombones and tuba), timpani and organ, dramatically presents the story of Christmas and includes portions not normally found in settings of the Christmas story, such as the prophecy of Jeremiah and the actions of King Herod in Bethlehem.

**Join us Sunday at 11 a.m. for
this powerful witness to the
Christmas story!**

Providing hope at Christmas

SoupMobile's Celebrate Jesus event will bring over 500 of Dallas' homeless citizens into the Hyatt Regency Hotel for Christmas Eve, providing a warm bed, a roof over their heads, a shower, a sit-down banquet dinner, much-needed comfort and rest, and hope.

On the morning of Christmas Eve, about 1,000 volunteers gather outside and inside the Hyatt, flanking the red carpets that lead the homeless from the buses to check-in. There will be music, a marching band and a shower of fake snow, and we will welcome them, offering smiles, hugs and handshakes as they enter the hotel. We do so because homeless folks seldom get smiles, handshakes, hugs, or encouragement of any kind. They live on the fringes of society, never receiving the common courtesies that most of us take for granted.

"The expressions on their faces and their firm handshakes really showed their gratitude for having a warm, safe place to stay, and for the welcome that we offered. They seemed surprised and glad to have the crowd cheering," said Paige Baker. "So many of the folks are crying, they're so happy and excited. That really affected me," added Wil Kahlich.

We also do this as a celebration of the gift that SoupMobile, through our financial contributions, is able to give these people as a sign that they are loved, that they are special, and that they are not forgotten, not by God or by their neighbors. Charlotte Wright added, "For just a moment they know that people care. I think if I were homeless I would mostly feel alone, so I think Celebrate Jesus really helps them feel special, like people do care."

In the last two years, UPUMC has partnered with SoupMobile to care for the homeless and underfed. Last Christmas Eve UPUMC took over 125 volunteers and raised just over \$10,000 for SoupMobile. Since then, our youth, children and their families, our UPUMC staff, adult Covenant Groups, and other UPUMC members have taken part in more than 20 service projects with SoupMobile.

"After going the last couple years, it's become a new tradition on Christmas Eve," Carson Wright said. "I love going to serve with SoupMobile year-round. I can't wait to go to Celebrate Jesus for the first time this year," added Gus Hodges.

To volunteer or donate for SoupMobile's 6th annual Celebrate Jesus event, go to celebratejesus.upumcyouth.org.

EVENTS, OPPORTUNITIES & NEWS

Tuba Christmas trip

UPUMC's Spiritual Arts Series will sponsor a trip to this year's Tuba Christmas on Friday, Dec. 23, at Thanksgiving Square beginning at noon. The church bus will leave at 11 a.m. Contact Dick Wilson, dwilson@upumc.org, to make reservations.

Church offices closed

The church office will be closed Dec. 26-Jan. 2. Regular office hours resume on Tuesday, Jan. 3. Merry Christmas!

Volunteer opportunities

A list of volunteer opportunities through local agencies can always be found at the Connection Center. Red volunteer cards can be completed and dropped off at the Welcome desk anytime during the year. For more information, contact Greg Porray, gporray@sbcglobal.net.



The UPUMC Youth Department would like to encourage all parents of children & youth to attend a free screening of the documentary *Race to Nowhere*. The film discusses the pressures that American kids feel to achieve in school and extracurricular activities, to be top of their class, and to get into college, even at the elementary school age.

For more information, e-mail Neil Moseley, aneilmos@gmail.com

Share THE LIGHT

Sharing the light of Jesus Christ in our community and beyond.

PASTOR'S CHALLENGE:

It is an inescapable truth that Jesus, born in a stable among the poor, repeatedly proclaimed the good news to the poor. For me to celebrate the Christ of Christmas I cannot ignore the opportunity I have to help meet the needs of those who hold a special place in the heart of Jesus.

For several years UPUMC has had a wonderful alternative gift program called Share the Light. Don't buy someone another sweater or necktie they don't need. Instead give them a card that says a monetary gift has been given in their name to a mission agency that helps others.

My challenge to you: make at least some of your gifts alternative gifts. If you have never given a Share the Light gift, give one or more this year. These gifts matter significantly in the lives of those served by the mission agencies.

Bring the whole family into the discussion. Decide who among your family and friends would appreciate receiving a gift given to mission in their name. We spend a lot of time and money on decorations and parties to lift our spirits. Maybe this would be a good starting point for a family discussion. "How much will we spend on ourselves this Christmas and how much will we share with others that are not as fortunate?"

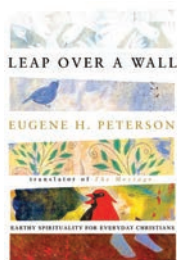
When we share the light of Christ, I believe we also share in the joy of Christ. We have an opportunity this Advent as a church to have a greater missional impact than ever before.

Blessings,
Leighton Bearden



Share the Light brochures and cards can be found at the Connection Center or give online at www.upumc.org/share.

COOPER SCHOOL RETURNS Registration starts Jan. 8



Brown Bag Book Club

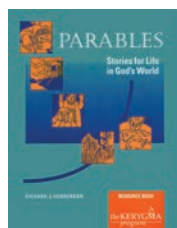
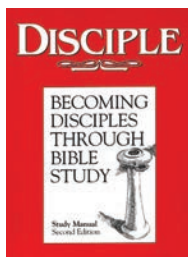
This thoughtful, multigenerational women's book club discusses a wide range of spiritually inspired books on a weekly basis. Join the book club any time and bring your lunch! Contact Linda Taylor at lataylor_tx@yahoo.com or 214.226.3743. **Ongoing, Wednesdays, Noon-1 p.m., led by Linda Taylor, cost: free.**

Christian Yoga

In this 8- or 10-week gentle yoga class, you will stretch and tone with deep breathing as well as learn different relaxation techniques to release stress. No experience required. Enrollment is for the entire series, not individual classes; course fee is due at first class. Additional days of the week will be added as need arises. **Winter Wednesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Jan. 4-March 7; Winter Thursdays, 8:30-9:30 a.m., Jan. 5-March 8; Spring Wednesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m., March 21-May 23, Spring Wed./Thurs., 8:30-9:30 a.m., Weds., March 28, April 11, 25 and May 9, Thurs., April 5, 19 and May 3, 17, led by Cherry Fowler, cost: \$80/\$64.**

Disciple I, The Old Testament

This 16-week course is an introduction to the Old Testament through an in-depth study beginning with the creation stories in Genesis and ending with the people waiting for a Savior. **Tuesdays, 6:30-8 p.m., Jan. 17-May 8, led by Carol French and Teal Lang, cost: \$18**

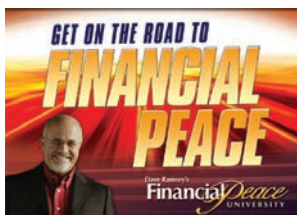


Parables: Stories for Life in God's World

In this 7-session Kerygma series study, participants will discover fresh perspectives in these timeless words, to enrich faith and deepen discipleship. **Wednesdays, 9:30-11 a.m., Feb. 1-March 14, led by Tricia Carroll, cost: \$16.**

Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University

Did you know that there are over 800 Scriptures regarding personal finance? Financial Peace University teaches stewardship – how to manage 100% of what God has given. Through this 13-week course taught by Dave Ramsey via DVD, congregation members are equipped



with a biblically-based accountability of managing their resources. **Sundays, 5-7 p.m., Jan. 22-Apr. 22.**

Lunch with Mark

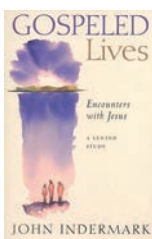
The portrait of Jesus we find in Mark is one of a powerful man, confident in his choices, but thoroughly trusting in God even as he faces persecution and ultimately death. Those who struggle in their discipleship are comforted to read in Mark's gospel how even Jesus' followers so often fail to understand the depth and breadth of Jesus' power and authority. Eat lunch together and discuss this Gospel of encouragement in this six-week study. **Sundays, noon-1:30 p.m., Feb. 5-March 11, led by the Rev. Dick Wilson, cost: donation for lunch.**

A LENTEN STUDY

Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. led by the Rev. Dick Wilson

GOSPELED LIVES

During these six weeks, daily devotional readings will be used followed by a weekly group meeting to see how our lives are gospels today. Cost is \$15.



STARTS FEBRUARY 29!

Dr. Tull to sign new book

Dr. Justin Tull will be having a book signing before and after the 11 a.m service on Sunday, Dec. 18, in the Welcome Center area. Dr. Tull will have all three of his books available including study guides. His latest book is of particular



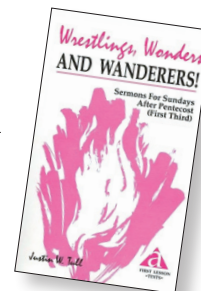
Dr. Tull has been called away on several occasions since his retirement – once to serve as Senior Interim Pastor at Sun Creek UMC, Allen, Texas, following the death of beloved pastor, Kathleen Baskin-Ball, and in 2009 as Senior



interest because of the season, *Christmas Journeys: Finding Joy along the Way*. Twenty percent of this book's sales Sunday will be donated to

University Park's work with Amigos Days, a favorite mission activity.

Dr. Tull and his wife, Janette, affiliated with University Park UMC following his retirement in 2006. He and Janette have both sung in the chancel choir and Dr. Tull has taught various UPUMC Sunday School classes. As a part of the Cooper School he recently led a four-week seminar on his book *Why God, Why?* He has also worked on seven Habitat for Humanity projects and several Amigos Days for University Park.

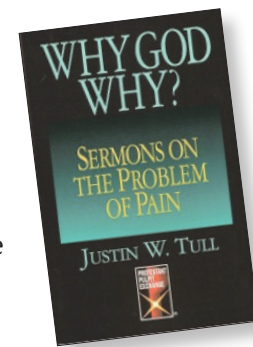


Interim Pastor at Vista Ridge UMC, Lewisville, Texas. He is presently in the process to being approved as a trainer of interim pastors for our conference.

During his 37 years of active ministry Dr. Tull served as senior pastor in five churches including Calvary UMC, Paris, Texas, Oak Lawn UMC, Dallas, Walnut Hill UMC, Dallas, and First UMC, Denton.

Dr. Tull was graduated from Hendrix College with a major in literature and philosophy. He has received three degrees from Perkins School of Theology: a Master of Theology, a Master of Sacred Theology in Old Testament, and a Doctor of Ministry in Preaching.

Justin and Janette live in Carrollton and are privileged to do grandparent duty for six grandchildren.



Cooper School LeXure Series

The Journey to Assurance and Stability in Faith
Wednesday, Jan. 18, 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall



William J. Abraham
Albert C. Outler Professor of Wesley Studies,
Perkins School of Theology, SMU

Gathering & Refreshments: 6-6:30 p.m.
Lecture: 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve

WITH UPUMC

SATURDAY, DEC. 24, IN THE SANCTUARY

4:30 p.m.

Family Christmas Eve Service with Cherub & Carol Choirs

7:00 p.m.

Candlelight Christmas Eve Holy Communion Service

*with Wesleyan Choir & Aldersgate Chorale
and the Rev. Leighton Bearden preaching*

10:30 p.m. Christmas Music for Harp & Organ

with Kimberly DeRosa & Damin Spritzer

11:00 p.m.

Candlelight Christmas Eve Holy Communion Service

with Chancel Choir and the Rev. Leighton Bearden preaching

CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICE

Worship, 11 a.m., Sanctuary or Fellowship Hall

Only one worship hour; traditional service in the Sanctuary or The Bridge in Fellowship Hall. There will be no Sunday school.

There will also be only one hour of worship Sunday, Jan. 1.



Sunday Worship

Dec. 18, Traditional, 8:45 & 11 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Humble Beginnings, Luke 1:26-38

the Rev. Leighton Bearden

The Bridge, 11 a.m.

When Heaven and Earth Meet,

The World Turned Right Side Up

Dr. Robert L. Foster

Dec. 25, Traditional, 11 a.m.

Christmas Day

The Baby Has Arrived, Luke 2:1-7

the Rev. Leighton Bearden

The Bridge, 11 a.m.

When Heaven and Earth Meet,

Dr. Robert L. Foster

Looking Ahead

12/18 *The Christmas Story*

Chili Cook-off

Live Nativity

12/19 Christmas Camp

12/20 Christmas Camp

12/24 SoupMobile's Celebrate Jesus

12/25 One hour of worship

no Sunday school

1/1 One hour of worship

no Sunday school

1/08 Cooper School registration

Choir rehearsals resume

Member News

BIRTH:

Isaac "Ike" Shepherd Laughlin was born to Kendall and Shelly Laughlin, Jr. Nov. 22 in San Diego, CA. Ike is the great-grandson of Carolyn Loy and the late Tommy Loy.

BAPTISMS:

Noah Oliver Stinchcomb, son of Jennifer and Nate Stinchcomb, on Nov. 27.

George Stratford Clark, son of Laura and Brent Clark, on Nov. 27.

William Alexander Messer, V, son of Brooke and Will Messer, on Nov. 27.

Jack Leonard Barker, son of Amy and Andrew Barker, on Dec. 11.

Benjamin Alan Gruner, son of Brandi and Sam Gruner, on Dec. 11.

OUR NEWEST MEMBERS



Paul and Michelle Clevenger joined Nov. 20.



Ashley Wainscott joined Nov. 11 pictured with husband Tommy.

Lions, oh my!



Kindergartners in Sunday school created lion masks as part of their lesson on Daniel and the Lion's Den. The kids really enjoyed this activity and loved growling like lions! Sunday school starts at 9:45 Sunday mornings.