

## BACKPACKS RECEIVE BLESSING



Children gather with the Rev. Rachel Baughman during the Blessing of the Backpacks, a special moment for youngsters heading back to school. The children were given ID badges for their backpacks, which read in part: God loves me and so do the people of University Park UMC. Donations of school supplies for the Wesley-Rankin Community Center also were blessed during this time.

## New ways to inform and welcome members to the church family

By Jeff McCormick



Are you ready to join the church? Do you know someone who is? What exactly does it mean to be a member of University Park

United Methodist Church?

We are now making it easier than ever to become a part of the family of UPUMC. We are very excited about these new plans to inform and welcome new members. On Sept. 20, we will hold our first Membership Luncheon. We'll gather for lunch at noon to hear from our senior pastor, Leighton Bearden, about what it means to be a member of UPUMC.

This gathering is intended for all prospective members and guests who simply want to hear about the exciting things going on here and how they can be involved. It will be a place where questions will be answered and newcomers can be welcomed into the family of UPUMC. This Membership Luncheon will be held the week prior to Joining Day, another new event.

Joining Day will be the designated day for becoming a member of the church. These will be held the week following the Membership Luncheons and will occur in all three worship services.

Individuals and couples who attended the Membership Luncheon will now join the church publicly in worship. It will be a celebration for the entire congregation to welcome our newest members.

Guests will be invited to attend the Membership Luncheons through personal invitations. Additionally, if you are a guest who is thinking about becoming a member or you have a friend or family member who wants more information on joining, please call the church office at 214.368.1435.

*Jeff McCormick is director of Connecting Ministries. Contact him for more information on these membership events at [jmccormick@upumc.org](mailto:jmccormick@upumc.org) or 214.368.1435, ext. 106.*

## Exploring a 'middle way' for Christian living in Cooper School

Adam Hamilton addresses many controversial topics in his book *Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White*.

He explores divisive issues in chapters such as "Apes, Evolution, Adam and Eve," "Will There Be Hindus in Heaven?" and "The

Questions of War." Each essay presents both sides of the topic, encouraging the reader to learn and listen to the point of view of the other.

Hamilton ultimately starts the discussion on "what a Christianity of the middle way might look like,"

See "Seeing Gray," page 4

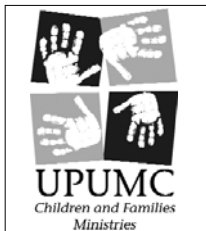
### Becoming a member

Sept. 20 – Membership Luncheon

Sept. 27 – Joining Day

Oct. 25 – Membership Luncheon

Nov. 8 – Joining Day



UPUMC  
Children and Families  
Ministries

First Wednesday  
Family Night 4A



Young adults  
plan for fall

5A

### IN WORSHIP SEPT. 6, 2009

Traditional, 8:45 and 11 a.m.  
"Building Your Beliefs: Getting Real in Your Wilderness," Luke 4:1-13  
the Rev. Leighton Bearden

The Bridge, 11 a.m.  
"Common Sense, Common Justice and Uncommon Grace," Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23  
Dr. Gary Kindley, preaching

### IN WORSHIP SEPT. 13, 2009

Traditional, 8:45 and 11 a.m.  
"Building Your Beliefs: Virtual Gods or the Real Thing?," Joshua 24:15-18  
the Rev. Leighton Bearden

The Bridge, 11 a.m.  
"Who's to Bless and Who's to Blame?" Genesis 12:1-20  
the Rev. Rebecca Frank

## SEEING GRAY

Continued from page 1

by looking "for ways to integrate the legitimate concerns of each side, often forging a new way forward, or at least plowing forward while taking seriously the views of the other."

Jeff McCormick and Blair Thompson invite you to continue the discussion each week in their Cooper School class on the book, meeting Wednesdays from 6:45 to 7:45 p.m. from Sept. 9-Oct. 7. Register online at [www.upumc.org/cooper](http://www.upumc.org/cooper) or in the Welcome Center.

### Other Cooper School classes starting in September:

#### Christian Yoga

This gentle yoga class involves stretching, toning and learning different relaxation techniques.

Starting: Sept. 8, 9 or 10

Leader: Cherry Fowler

#### Women of the Word

This Bible study for women of all ages will concentrate on women in the Old Testament and how the story of each one can challenge women today.

Starting: Sept. 9

Leader: the Rev. Rebecca Frank

#### Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University

Through this 13-week course taught by Dave Ramsey via DVD, participants are equipped with a biblically-based accountability of managing their resources.

Starting: Sept. 13

Leaders: Ritchie and Kathy Champion and Wes Schuler and Katherine Burr

#### The Thirteen Apostles

Jesus personally chose twelve men to lead in his ministry and a thirteenth, Matthias, was later selected by the apostles themselves. This six-week study will look at the characteristics of each and help us find something about their lives to help us move forward on our spiritual journeys.

Starting: Sept. 15

Leader: the Rev. Dick Wilson

#### Christianity and World Religions

This six-week multimedia study will satisfy people's curiosity by answering common questions about other religions. The course is completed with a summary of the essential beliefs of Christianity.

Starting: Sept. 15

Leaders: the Rev. Larry and Carol Ann Ravert

#### Disciple II: Into the Word – Into the World, Luke

This eight-week course, the third section of Disciple II, is an in-depth study of The Gospel of Luke which emphasizes the rhythm of coming to God through the word and going for God into the world.

Starting: Sept. 16

Leader: Teal Lang

#### The Way of Blessedness

This nine-week study from the Companions in Christ series explores Jesus' teachings from the Sermon on the Mount. The journey invites participants to discover Jesus' vision of the kingdom of God on earth and to develop and live a personal "rule of life" that helps us reside in that kingdom.

Starting: Sept. 16

Leaders: Diana Wilson and the Rev. Dick Wilson

## Connect with other parents at First Wednesday Family Night



Join us for an opportunity to connect with other parents and learn more about what it means to be a 21st-century parent with "Parenting in Today's World," a series of

courses led by the Rev. Andy Stoker, Ph.D.

These courses, presented as part of First Wednesday Family Night, are from 6-7 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month through May 2010.

The remaining fall dates are Oct. 7 and Nov. 4. The October topic is "Spent: Over-worked and Over-spent Parents." The November topic is "What to Do With the Generations at Thanksgiving." Register for courses at [www.upumc.org/cooper](http://www.upumc.org/cooper).

Families are invited to join us for din-

ner at 5 p.m. in the Youth Center. After dinner and fellowship, the children will go upstairs at 6 p.m. for Bible studies in their classrooms while parents stay in the Youth Center to hear the Rev. Stoker. He is the associate director of Connectional Ministries for Children, Youth, Family and Camping for the North Texas Conference.

All parents are encouraged to stick around for 30 minutes after to participate in conversations with other parents. We have invited parents whose children are grown to come and share some of their experiences with you and to build relationships with new parents as an extension of the love and nurture of the body of Christ, the church.

To learn more, contact the Rev. Rachel Baughman at [rbaughman@upumc.org](mailto:rbaughman@upumc.org). Childcare is available upon request; contact [cwashburn@upumc.org](mailto:cwashburn@upumc.org).

## Spiritual Arts Series celebrates a literary union of mind and soul

The Spiritual Arts Series has partnered with the Writer's Garret to welcome Pulitzer Prize-winner Marilynne Robinson to the Writers Studio for an interview before a live audience that will be recorded for radio broadcast.

The Writers Studio, inspired by "Inside the Actors Studio" aired on Bravo Television, features revealing and fascinating interviews with some of the world's most accomplished authors. Co-hosts Randy Gordon and Catherine Cuellar invite the audience inside these intimate talks on the life and art of being a writer. Each episode is taped for radio broadcast on KERA and NPR affiliates. Past authors have included Alice Walker, Umberto Eco, Julia Alvarez and Joan Didion.

Robinson's two most recent novels, *Gilead* and *Home*, evoke in readers an intellectual rigor and spiritual curiosity uncommon in much of today's fiction.

Robinson has been called by the *London Times*, "The world's best writer of prose"—a bold statement considering she has written only four books in nearly 30 years. Her first novel, *Housekeeping*, came out in 1980 and was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. Her next novel, *Gilead*, arrived 24 years later and garnered both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award. These works have won Robinson a devoted readership worldwide.

Her novels explore the recurring themes of family structure, religion,

domesticity, and isolation. While uniquely focused on American traditions and way of life, these books bring to light the struggles of everyday humanity in which all people of all backgrounds can relate. For her most recent novel, *Home*, Robinson has received the 2009 Orange Prize for Fiction.

This Writers Studio event will be presented at 2 p.m. in the Sanctuary, with a reception and book signing at 3:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Tickets are \$15 for the general public; \$12 for members of UPUMC, The Writer's Garret, and KERA; and \$10 for students and seniors. Contact the Rev. Dick Wilson at [dwilson@upumc.org](mailto:dwilson@upumc.org) or 214.368.1435, ext. 146 for more information.

Tickets may be purchased in the Welcome Center or at [www.writersgarret.org](http://www.writersgarret.org). Childcare is available with 72 hours notice by e-mailing [cwashburn@upumc.org](mailto:cwashburn@upumc.org).



## Hear how to take control of end-of-life decisions

Whom do you want to make decisions for you if you are not able to make your own, both on financial matters and health care decisions?

What medical treatments and care are acceptable?

Do you wish to be resuscitated if you stop breathing and/or your heart stops?

These and other important end-of-life matters will be covered on Thursday, Sept. 24, when Dr. Darrell Loyless from the Texas Methodist Foundation will be here to present "Putting Your House In Order."

We'll meet in the Caldwell Room at 6:30 p.m. All friends and family are invited to come. Please sign up in the folder in the Welcome Center or by calling the church at 214.368.1435.

## CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES



Work continues on the church's new parking lot, which is expected to be completed by the end of the month. (above)



Power was restored to the church building Aug. 25 after a day-and-a-half closure to allow workers to switch from aerial to underground electrical service. (right)

### Mission Matters

## Make a commitment to take action



Sometimes I come across a book that speaks so loudly that I end up ordering whole box-fuls. *The Hole in Our Gospel* is one of those books. Two dozen copies arrived yesterday, and if there are

any left on my shelf when you read this, I'll gladly give you one.

Written by Rich Stearns, president of World Vision, the book asks hard questions of today's church, particularly regarding our reflection of Christ's love for suffering people around the globe. Stearn's own story is fascinating and his invitation to respond with gospel love is compelling.

At the beginning of the chapter titled "Finally, the Good News", he offers this:

*"Sometimes I would like to ask God why He allows poverty, suffering, and injustice when He could do something about it."*

*"Well, why don't you ask Him?"*

*"Because I'm afraid He would ask me the same question."* - Anonymous

The good news, of course, is that there is much we can do. Take a look at this week's opportunities, and make a commitment to do something.

Thanks for loving the world with God.

### Time-sensitive opportunities

• **September Communion Offering: Africa University** Our communion offering this month will go directly to support of students at AU. More than 30 students have completed their educational requirements for graduation but have

been unable to take their final exams to graduate because they still owe fees of \$38,000 (in U.S. dollars). Another 23 students are ready to begin the senior year but do not yet have the available fees. The annual tuition per student is \$5,200.

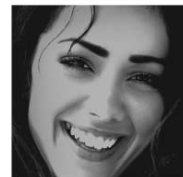
• **Food drive for North Dallas Shared Ministries:** NDSM provides a full complement of food and hygiene items to over 30,000 persons annually. A typical five-day supply of food can be provided for \$40 per person. Collection bags and lists of needed items will be made available the Sunday mornings of Sept. 13 and 20.

• **Helping the homeless, Sunday, Sept. 13:** Young adults serving breakfast, downtown Bridge (6:30-8:30 a.m.). For information contact Blair Thompson at [bthompson@upumc.org](mailto:bthompson@upumc.org).

### Save the Date!

- **Young Adult Mission Oct. 23-25:** Join young adults from other area churches on a Labors for Neighbors weekend trip to Beaumont to put on a new roof on a hurricane-hit home.
- **Sunday, Nov. 15:** Young adults serving breakfast (6:30-8:30 a.m.)
- **Wesley-Rankin "Evening Under the Stars" Benefit Gala at Frontiers of Flight Museum, Nov. 14.** Find more info at [wesleyrankin.org](http://wesleyrankin.org).

*The Rev. Rebecca Frank, senior associate pastor, is the minister of Mission and Outreach Ministries. Reach her at [rfrank@upumc.org](mailto:rfrank@upumc.org) or 214.368.1435, ext. 113.*



## Fall activities set for young adults

Young adults invite you to serve at the Bridge, a homeless shelter in downtown Dallas, for two dates this fall.

A group of young adults will serve lunch at the shelter from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 13, and will serve breakfast there from 6:30-8:30 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 15.

Young adults from UPUMC also will join young adults from other area churches on a weekend trip to Beaumont to put a new roof on a hurricane-hit home. This Labors for Neighbors mission trip will be Oct. 23-25.

Fellowship for young adults includes monthly lunches following the 11 a.m. services. Meet outside Fellowship Hall to join us for lunch on these dates: Sept. 27, Oct. 25 and Nov. 8.

For more information on these and other young adult activities, contact Blair Thompson at [bthompson@upumc.org](mailto:bthompson@upumc.org) or 214.368.1435, ext. 127.

## UPUMC NEWS AND NOTES

### UPLift returns Sept. 9

Join the UPUMC church family and share a family-style meal in Fellowship Hall from 6-6:45 p.m. and then attend Bible study, choir practice or a variety of programs for children, youth and adults. Dinner is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. Children under 2 are free. Come ready to enjoy a home-cooked meal and no matter what is on the menu, we'll always have PB&J sandwiches available.

### Safe Sanctuaries training

Two dates remain for Safe Sanctuaries training for volunteers. This training is mandatory, so any volunteers who will be working with children or youth *must* attend one training session. Childcare will be available upon request by contacting Carolyn Washburn at [cwashburn@upumc.org](mailto:cwashburn@upumc.org). Training is offered from 10 a.m.-noon and 5-7 p.m. Sept. 13, and from 5-7 p.m. Sept. 20. Contact the Rev. Rachel Baughman at [rbaughman@upumc.org](mailto:rbaughman@upumc.org) with any questions.

### Third grade Bible retreat

All third-graders are invited to a retreat Sept. 18-19 at Bridgeport to prepare for their third grade Bible course. Contact Jessica Nelson for details and to register at [jnelson@upumc.org](mailto:jnelson@upumc.org).

### B.I.G. Time coming this fall



Children's, Youth and Music Ministries invite your families to take part in B.I.G. Time, a new activities and worship time geared toward children and young families, led by the student leaders of our youth department. B.I.G. Time (Believing in God), offered monthly, will provide an hour of activities, snack supper and worship following children's choir practices on Sundays. Immediately after choir rehearsal, the youth will escort participants to the Youth Center for 20 minutes of guided activities and fun. B.I.G Time is open to kindergarten through sixth-grade students. The first B.I.G. Time will be Sept. 20 from 6-7 p.m. Contact Neil Moseley at [nmoseley@upumc.org](mailto:nmoseley@upumc.org) to learn more.

### Travel Ministry bound for Branson

Larry and Carol Ann Ravert will lead a holiday trip to Branson departing via motor coach on Monday, Nov. 2, and returning Thursday, Nov. 5. This all-inclusive trip, which includes Christmas shows, accommodations, admissions and meals, is \$595 per person. Registration forms are available in the

Welcome Center. A \$50 deposit reserves your seat. Payment in full is due by Oct. 15. For more information, contact Larry or Wynn Moore at 214.368.1435.

### Agape Not Home Alone needs volunteers

Volunteers are needed to deliver snacks to the after-school program at Agape Memorial United Methodist Church. Deliveries are done monthly at 3:15 p.m. Contact Candy Hearne at 214.841.0895 to learn more.

### Bingo prizes needed by C. C. Young

C.C. Young has requested donations for bingo prizes. Items needed are: boxes of Kleenex, lotion, white socks, gripper socks, bar soap, costume jewelry, note paper and pens, scarves/light stoles, toothpaste, toothbrushes, small purses, nail polish, manicure items, caps for men, medium-sized gift bags, body powder, room deodorizer, hairbrush/comb, stuffed animals, and sugar-free hard candy. Prizes may be delivered to the "B" building at C.C. Young or left with the front desk in the Welcome Center. Please put your name and address with the items, as they do want to acknowledge your gifts. Contact UPUMC member Kathryn Krueger, [kackyk@sbcglobe.com](mailto:kackyk@sbcglobe.com), with any questions.

## PRAYERS

(Names will remain on the prayer list for two weeks.  
To extend, call 214.368.1435, ext. 104.)

### Birth

Riley Ann Dudley was born Aug. 10 to Tricia Dudley. Grandparents are Quentin and Susan Dudley and great-grandparents are Charles and Virginia Myers.

**Hospital** - Bennett Head; Joshua Dyer

### Deaths

- Bernice Lenamond, grandmother of Matt Blum, on Aug. 24. Service was Aug. 28.
- Sally Hoffman, mother of Judy McCombs, on Aug. 29. Service was Sept. 1.
- Barbara Putilo, cousin of Onni Koskinen, on Aug 29. Service was Sept. 3.

### Prayer Requests

Andrew Hamilton; Bethany Dean, daughter of David Dean; Bob Shaw; Don Box; Don Moore, Sr., father-in-law of Wynn Moore; Edna Chambers, mother of Mark Chambers; Eva Guest, niece of Linda Durbin; Gary Isaacs; Homer Jones, father of Mary Jacobs; Jarvis, nephew of Constance Harp; Joe Ward, uncle of Matt Blum; Judy Likkel, mother of Erin Byxbee; Judy Parker, friend of Carolyn Washburn; Julie Fry, sister of Pam Dean; Katherine Brooks; Laura Gibbs, niece of Gay Iglehart; Layden Stroud, friend of Lu and Tommy Turner; Linda Rudy, aunt of Lydia Rudy; Marsha Tanner, friend of Linda Durbin; Natalie Goring, aunt of Kathy Krueger; Sammie Woolum; Sheila Flanagan, wife of Ricky Flanagan; Sherri Schuetz, daughter of Joan Slaughter; Tommy Turner; Wanda Knight and Ann Weaver, sisters of Blue Harris and aunts of Paige Flink

## UMW Circle meetings for September

### Circle 1 and 3 (joint meeting)

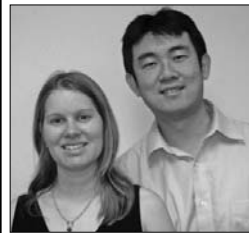
Please bring a can or two of food for the North Texas Food Bank Monday, Sept. 14, 10 a.m.  
Leaders: Diane Williamson (Circle 1)  
Kathy Krueger (Circle 3)  
Location: home of Kathy Krueger  
Program: the Rev. Rachel Baughman

### Circle 5

Monday, Sept. 14, 7 p.m.  
Leader: Kelli Sander  
Location: Church parlor  
Program: Marie Head/book review

## WELCOME REPORT

### New members



Eric Li and Jill Robertson-Li joined August 16.

Lydia Rudy joined in The Bridge on Aug. 2. Lydia has been volunteering with the youth. (photo not available)

### Baptisms



Joshua Aidan Dyer, son of Sarah and Ben Dyer, was baptized on Aug. 23. Also pictured is older son Noah.



Emma Ann and Matthew Hill Luedtke, twins of Matt and Tiffany Luedtke, were baptized on Aug. 30. Also pictured is big sister Ryan.

Benjamin David Teegarden, son of Sloan and Sydney Teegarden, was baptized on Aug. 9. (photo not available)