

SCHOOL OF ESSENTIAL WISDOM

WINTER TERM (continued) * Thursdays at 11 am *

January

Your Mind Matters

Join us for a transformative series of lectures designed to empower you with the latest science and practical tools for maintaining a thriving brain and supporting caregivers. Learn from top experts in the field:

- Dr. Param Dedhia, Functional Medicine Practitioner, will explore how our body systems work in harmony to support brain health.
- Rev. Dr. Terry Parsons, Psychotherapist, will share vital coping strategies for caregivers of those who are dealing with changes in brain function.
- Dr. Deepa Panjeti-Moore, Neurologist, will provide insights into the science of brain health and aging.

February

Black History Month

This month features powerful presentations celebrating African American history and culture:

- Rev. Daryl R. Ingram, Pastor of St. Luke AME, Garland, will lecture on The History of the AME Church in Texas.
- David Lee, Director of Education at the Hall of State, will explore The History of Juneteenth and its significance in the fight for freedom.
- Tiffany Silva, Music Educator and Professional Vocalist, will explain the roots and cultural impact of Spirituals and Gospel Music.
- Presiding District Court Judge Andrea Plumlee will recount her personal history: "My Black Story."

Spring 2025 Bible Studies

*** Sundays at 4 pm ***

JANUARY 5 - 26

Engaged: Paul's Letter to the Philippians
John Jenkins

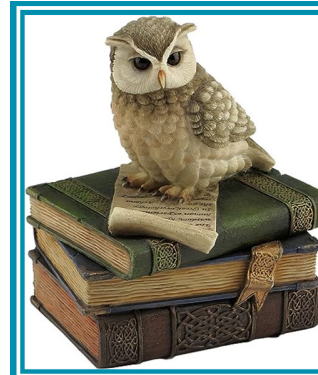
FEBRUARY 2 - APRIL 6

The Bible: What's It All About?
Bishop James Stanton

APRIL 27 - MAY 18

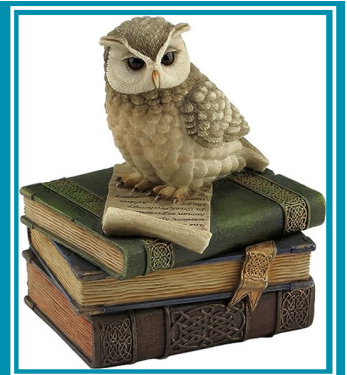
An Exploration of Key Old Testament Themes
Rabbinic Team at Congregation Shearith Israel

- Rabbi Ari Sunshine
- Rabbi Adam Roffman
- Rabbi Shira Wallach
- Rabbi Avi Mitzner



UPUMC
FOREVER BEGINNING

WORDS TO THE WISE



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Where's Baby Jesus?

"And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

- Luke 2:7

Believe me, I know better. Baby Jesus should not appear in the manger until Christmas morning. But every year, while decorating for Christmas, I place Him amongst the sheep, cattle, and lambs with Mary and Joseph affectionately looking at Him. In my defense, I do this for a perfectly good reason: I'm afraid after delivering the toys for Santa and eating his cookies, I'll forget to place Jesus in His manger. And while I'm confessing, by Christmas morning I probably wouldn't remember where I put baby Jesus twenty-five days earlier. I know, those are lame excuses, but every year I place baby Jesus in the manger, snuggled close to the lamb, so I'll be able to find Him and not have to worry about that precious Gift.

As usual, this year while hanging the garland and lights and setting up the nativity scenes, Jesus joined the sheep in the manger. Fortunately, a memory of years past returned to my heart. I remembered a special Christmas eighteen years ago when our holidays were changed forever.

That year, I truly felt Jesus' presence as He resided in the bedroom down the hall, sleeping in the heart of a little twelve-year-old boy who came to spend Christmas with us. Christ has been in his laugh as we played games together and in the amazement in his eyes at the candlelight Christmas Eve service. Jesus has been around Quannez protecting him as he lived his short life filled with more hurt and reality than a child his age should ever have to experience. You see, he was a "Shelter Kid" from Promise House, and he was our present under the tree.

He was never swaddled and placed in a warm bed with loving eyes gazing down upon him. He was moved from place to place, family member to family member waiting to find a home. We were so blessed that God let us be his home that Christmas. Quannez received toys and treats that thrilled him that Christmas morning, but we received a stocking full of blessings to have that joyful twelve-year-old with us.

So, where's Baby Jesus? He's just a touch away, waiting patiently for us to reach out and grab His Holy hand as He leads us to the stable, where a lowly child is lying in the cold, waiting for someone in this world to love him. I pray there's always room in the inn of my heart.

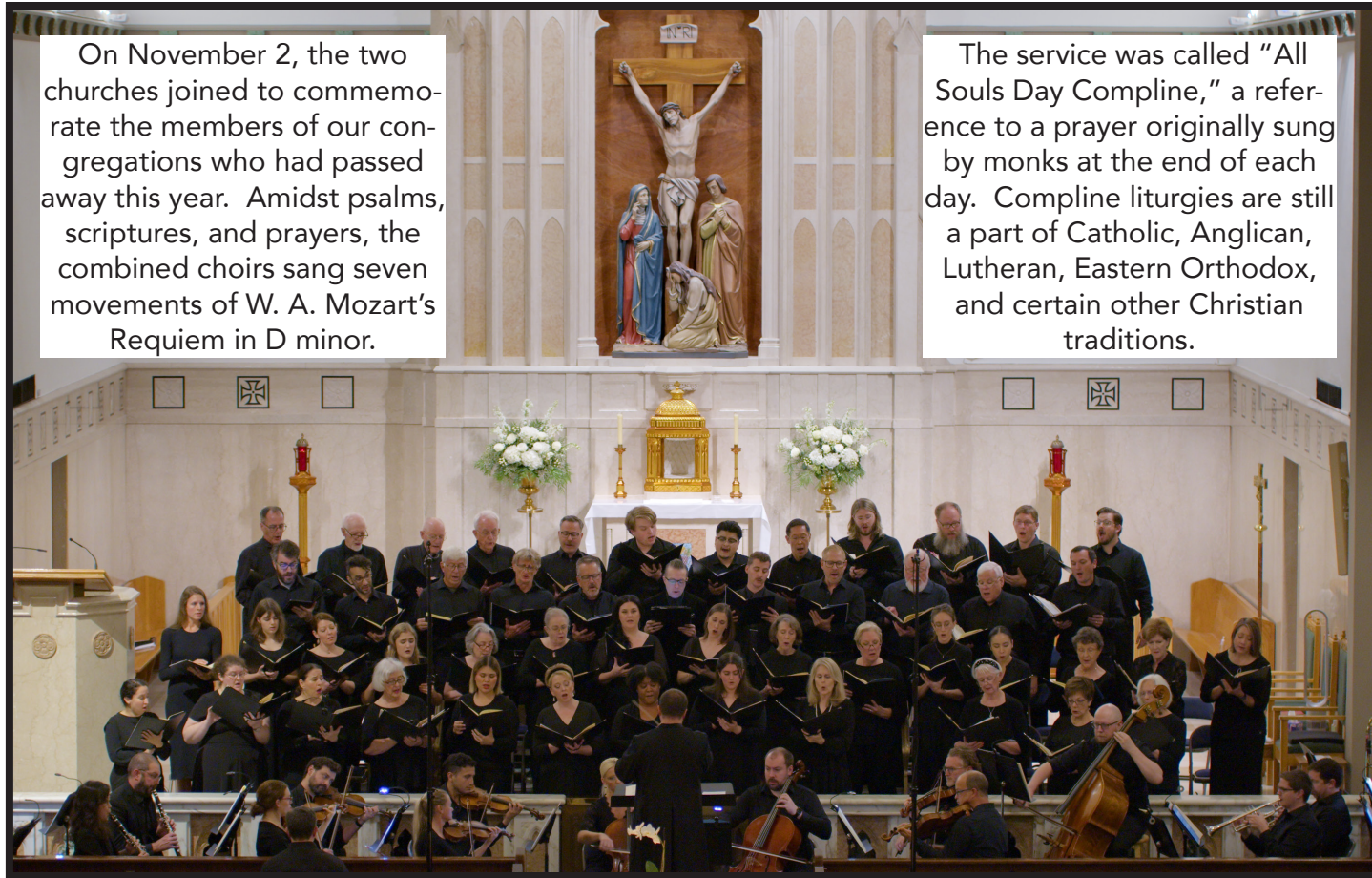
Merry Christmas from the Moses family.

- **Debi Moses**

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CHOIR and the CHANCEL CHOIR OF UNIVERSITY PARK UNITED METHODIST

On November 2, the two churches joined to commemorate the members of our congregations who had passed away this year. Amidst psalms, scriptures, and prayers, the combined choirs sang seven movements of W. A. Mozart's Requiem in D minor.

The service was called "All Souls Day Compline," a reference to a prayer originally sung by monks at the end of each day. Compline liturgies are still a part of Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Eastern Orthodox, and certain other Christian traditions.



On November 14, the School of Essential Wisdom hosted Stephen Fagin, Curator at the JFK Museum in Dealey Plaza. Mr. Fagin presenting a fascinating narrative of November 22, 1963, told from the point of view of actual eye witnesses. He used a power point containing archival photographs to accompany the story. After the lecture, he invited those who had memories of that day to be interviewed for the official Oral History Project. Four attendees volunteered.



Dr. Terry Darden was one of the volunteers to tell his story of that fateful day in November 1963. At the time, Terry was in dental training at Carswell Air Force Base in Ft. Worth. It happened that he was able to see the President's plane take off for its short flight from Ft. Worth to Dallas.

On Sunday, November 17, under the direction of Rev. Joe Stobaugh, the Ukelele Band of UPUMC made its debut at both worship services. The band played the spiritual *Wade in the Water*. Pastor Joe had taught the group not only how to play the instrument, but focused the class on the importance of vulnerability in our spiritual lives. Their culminating activity was playing a hymn in both Sunday services.



CHURCH CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION DEC. 8



INSIDE THE ACTIVITY CENTER



Four musicians played Christmas music during the indoor activities.



Choir members Carli Koontz and Gene McWhorter shared a table at the Chili Cookoff.



Simon, Vivi, and Julia were very careful about their decorating choices!



WDS mom Kristen Sweek helped her daughter Ava make a Christmas craft.

United Women in Faith

On November 11, members of the Deborah Circle of UPUMC's United Women in Faith gathered in the church kitchen to prepare



50 casseroles for older adults in the Wesley Rankin community. This effort, in collaboration with UPUMC's Lydia and Mary Martha Circles, resulted in 140 meals. The meals were delivered to Wesley Rankin's Casa Feliz for distribution, ensuring participants had lunches during Thanksgiving week when the center would be closed.

OUTSIDE ON THE LAWN



There were treats for kids, family pictures, hot cocoa and cider, a petting zoo, Pastor Joe leading the singing, Live Nativity, tree lighting...members, neighbors, visitors, volunteers all celebrating together.

