

UNIVERSITY PARK SCHOOL OF ESSENTIAL WISDOM begins its second 2021 term (three months) beginning next month, June 3rd. We had a very positive response to our first term with more than 50 people signed up. You must enroll to access the classes which are conducted LIVE via ZOOM with resource persons (professors, teachers, professionals, leaders in their field) at 11 o'clock a.m. on Thursdays. A rebroadcast of the live morning class experience is offered the same day at 8 p.m. with a live host. Further information available on UPUMC's website.

Pentecost Celebration

Come celebrate the creation of the church and the power of Holy Spirit with University Park UMC

PENTECOST WORSHIP SERVICE: May 23 at 11:00am | Join us at 11am on the Colgate lawn (north side of the church) as we remember the fiftieth day after the resurrection of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

PENTECOST FESTIVAL May 23 at 12:00pm | Join us at 12pm in Smith Park (south side of the church) following the worship service as we celebrate Pentecost together with food trucks, music, and kid's activities. All are welcome!

PENTECOST ONLINE SERVICE: May 23 on demand | Join us from the comfort of your own home online on

UPUMC

SENIORS

SENIOR *Spotlight*

Vol. XXII, Issue 2 | 12 May 2021



A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I remember starting off 2021 with a lot of hope that things would not only be different in the new year, but that they would be better, too. All too quickly January 6th became our new national 9/11, eclipsing the fact that it was the Day of Epiphany as if that were irrelevant. Then a personal disaster (not physical, fortunately – but equally discombobulating), my smartphone suddenly quit working. SmartPEOPLE regularly back up their phone. But I hadn't done that in quite a while. And all the Apple stores in this part of the world were closed because of the Covid pandemic, so I had to restore phone numbers, passwords, emails, documents, etc. in an entirely alternate way. Then the Big Freeze, bursting the fire-protection water pipes at the church, knocking out our offices and the copy room, destroying gummed envelopes and causing our copier and metered-postage mailing machine to be unuseable. All during this time we were working hard to have a successful opening of the School of Essential Wisdom with all its diverse details to successfully deal with, as well as everything it took to make our Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter celebrations a success (which they were; see photos) without the hard-working presence of our Executive Pastor Victoria Powers who was quite busy with a special project of her own. Her name is Hannah. (Once again, check the photo pages.) So, during all this, some ministries of our church have suffered, or "had to take a number and wait." As many of you have noticed, I haven't managed to put out an issue of The Senior Spotlight for a few months. But maybe now we're back on track.

We're all beginning to experience the results of more and more people getting the Covid vaccine. Now there's an urgency about getting EVERYONE immunized before the more contagious and deadly mutant strains of the virus become dominant. Our church was in the process of returning in-person worship services on Sunday mornings until the pipes burst and flooded so many places in our buildings. Fortunately (for many reasons), our Sanctuary (and organ!) were not damaged by water, but all the bathrooms available to the sanctuary were damaged and not useable. And it's not very polite or realistic to open up a church for public worship without bathrooms available. Our church Trustees, Building Committee, and Covid Council have all been working vigorously to get us "back together in church." After three great outdoor worship services on Palm Sunday and Easter, the church doors were opened for insanctuary worship on April 18th. Just one service for now, at 11a.m., but now, too, we are having outdoor Sunday School classes for children and some adult classes have resumed, weather permitting. So, Progress!!! With God's help and a lot of hard work by church staff and members, we are seeing a return to our beloved places and gatherings.

When I've been fortunate to visit with some of you, I'm frequently asked, "What's going on at the church?" There's just almost too much to say here! Between the physical restoration, the planning and effort that

went into the outdoor worship services, the programming required for adapting to our changing situation from month to month, ... there's absolutely a lot going on! For instance, in the Music Ministry alone there have been hundreds of work-hours put into salvaging sheet music and robes and books and equipment that was damaged by water, inventorying what can be restored and what must be replaced, as we imagine what our future needs will be.

Revs. Stobaugh's & Power's bi-weekly emails are always full of information. The church's website, upumc.org, is worth exploring. There are literally dozens of things going on – in and out of the church building. University Park UMC has not forgotten you or why it is here. It may require a different kind of effort for you to “connect,” but your involvement will still make a huge difference – to you and to all of us.

- Stephen

Poetry, Prose & Ponderings

from Maryam Mathis

One poet I have loved for almost four decades is Naomi Shihab Nye – a writer, teacher, and champion of the art form. Daughter of a first-generation Palestinian immigrant and a Midwestern woman, Naomi has long told stories about her upbringing in Ferguson, Missouri, and Palestine; her life and travels with her husband and son; and her experiences teaching young people how to write. Naomi Nye is recipient of the Texas Institute of Letters Lifetime Achievement Award and currently serves as the Poetry Foundation's Young People's Poet Laureate. She teaches at Texas State University and lives in San Antonio.

Naomi Shihab Nye's poetry is special to me because, while she often focuses on small moments and common everyday things, her message and scope are as big-hearted as the sky. Here are a few examples of her subjects: “The Yellow Glove,” “The Traveling Onion,” “My Father and the Fig Tree.”

I love how Nye makes us pause and look at simple, lovely, “common” things; in today's poem, the specific, humble beauty of the Little Blanco.

Little Blanco River

You're only a foot deep	make a clean swishing sound
under green water	centuries of skirts
your smooth shale skull	lifting & falling
is slick and cool	in delicate rounds
blue dragonfly	no one makes a state park out of you
skims you like a stone	you're not deep enough
skipping skipping	little blanco river
it never goes under	don't ever get too big
you square-dance with boulders	

[This section of The Senior Spotlight is a place for you to share a favorite poem or passage of prose. Add to it a brief reflection on what it has meant to you and why, and mail submissions to “Senior Spotlight Poems & Prose; 4024 Caruth Blvd.; Dallas TX 75225,” or email “sfleming@upumc.org,” subject line “Senior Spotlight Poems & Prose.” Submissions may be edited for formatting and available space.]

Pause & Ponder

Are you thinking or feeling that offering a reflection on a bit of prose or poetry is too much for you? How about, then, just sharing some good words of encouragement you've run across recently. I'm sure there are “words you live by” you know by heart, or are written on a bookmark, or hold up a photo on your refrigerator. Send it in!

PODCASTS -R-US

Warning: Do Not Be Intimidated By Podcasts! Remember listening to the radio? Some people still do. With today's technology (a computer, SmartPhone, or tablet) we can listen to “radio programs” any time we want. Dede Casad and Stephen Fleming have recorded over 20 interviews with senior members of our church, and you can listen to them any time you like by accessing them as podcasts or by listening to them on our church website. In fact, if you type “upumc.podbean.com” into your browser, you can go directly to all of our church's podcasts. Our Senior Life podcasts are called Wisdom of the Sages. They are a wonderful way to learn more about our fellow church members, sometimes about our church history, along with a healthy dose of words of wisdom to live by. A new one is added every week or so.

KEEP UP WITH WHAT'S HAPPENING!

In addition to our frequent emails from our pastors and other members of our church staff, you can see more about what's coming up next on our church calendar (upumc.org/news-events/event-calendar).

LIVE SUNDAY WORSHIP ONLINE: Facebook, Sundays at 11am or at www.upumc.org/onlineworship.

MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY: Wednesdays at noon on our Facebook page.

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER: Sign-up at www.upumc.org/newsletter.

MONTHLY STAFF-PICKS BOOK STUDIES: second Tuesdays, 8 p.m. (upumc.org/news-events).

PRAYER REQUESTS: www.upumc.org/prayer

Prayers, Condolences, Support

Since our last Senior Spotlight we have suffered the loss of several church members. Our prayers are with the families of LeAnn Harris Solomon who died on January 10th of this year (daughter-in-law Margie Harris; niece Mollie Newman); Diane Brooks' mother, Ruth Crain, died on January 26th; Gladys Pully's son Steven died on January 29th; John Roach, member of the Wedding Ring Sunday School Class, died February 18th; and Mary Helen Allburt died on February 22nd at 100 years of age.

Keep the families and loved ones of these who have been dear to us in your prayers. Prayer is how stay connected to the love of God through the saddest of times. It is the Holy Spirit who consoles and ministers to us in ways that go beyond our words and understanding, who binds us together in love, and who binds up the wounds and sorrows that life dishes out. Let us always be ready to pray for one another.

Authors Are Among Us

It may not surprise you to learn that we have some published authors amongst us. But you may not know WHO they are. And really, anyone who knows Bob Munroe should think it only natural that he might have committed his knowledge and experience to the printed word. His new book is *An Engineer's Space Race Stories and More: Never Before Revealed Behind the Scenes Stories During the Space Race* from IBM. Neither might it surprise you to learn that Dede Casad has a new book now in print. The *Nephew* is a historical novel about the Apostle Paul's travels from the point of view of Paul's nephew who travels with him. But did you know that Dede also has 20+ other books in print, too? Congratulations on these accomplishments, to both of you! We're proud to know you!