

# The Newsletter

**Memorial United Methodist Church**  
6100 Berkman Drive Austin TX 78723

Rev. Cynthia Kepler-Karrer - Pastor

**Feeding Northeast Austin, body, mind, and spirit in the name of Jesus.**

### *Sunday Schedule*

Sunday School 9:15-10:00 a.m.

Worship - 10:30 a.m.

Find all our Newsletters on our

**Web site: [www.memorialumcaustin.com](http://www.memorialumcaustin.com)**

Find us on Facebook at

Memorial United Methodist Church-Austin

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# April 2020



## ***Physically Distant but not Spiritually Distant***

**Until further notice, all in-person events, church meetings and discipleship/worship meetings at Memorial UMC have been cancelled/postponed or moved online.** We know that some of you are less proficient at doing things online or simply don't have the resources to do so. We are working on how to stay connected to each other during this time and how to include those who lack these resources. This newsletter contains a lot of information about our current plans and practices. We have been advised that this could last through the end of April, potentially into May as well.

Though many of the communications have said that we are taking these steps out of an abundance of caution, I believe we are also taking them out of an abundance of love. Love for each other and love for the communities in which we live and move. We will miss a lot—celebrations that we will need to move to a later date, regular moments together that keep momentum going.

But as I was preparing with Daniel Swayze the first hymn of our first Sunday in distant worship, "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee", I especially noted the third line which contains the words, "Teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine."

In these days when we can't hug someone or reach out to touch their hand or even in some cases be present to each other, we need for God to teach us how to love each other all over again. Many of us still have the ability to write a letter or to pick up the phone or to check on a neighbor or a friend. To share resources with the church and other helping agencies. That has always been the work of the church: to see what God is calling us to do with what we have.

What we have looks different today than it did five years ago...or even yesterday! But we will keep being the church. I am praying for each of you. Peace and joy...Pastor Cynthia

# NEWS FROM PEWS



By Billie Nixon

Membership Coordinator



## Mary Syble McCalmon

**Berglund**, 88, of Austin, Texas passed away on Sunday, February 23, 2020. She was born to George and Mary McCalmon in Bremen, Georgia.

She graduated from O'Keefe High School in Atlanta, Georgia in 1949. After graduation, she was employed as a Secretary to the Principal of O'Keefe High School for several years. She met her future husband, George Thomas Berglund while she was on vacation in Florida. They married in June 1957 and moved to Houston, Texas. She gave birth to two daughters, Teresa and Karen, and devoted the rest of her life to her husband and family.

She was a member of Memorial United Methodist Church in Austin, Texas since 1976. She enjoyed volunteering with her United Methodist Women groups and loved to serve others. She was an amazing wife, mother and grandmother who always put her family first. She lived a wonderful life and told many stories of her childhood in Georgia with her family and friends.

A visitation for family and friends was held from 10:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. February 29, 2020 at Cook-Walden/Capital Parks Funeral Home in Pflugerville, Texas immediately followed by a graveside service in Cook-Walden/Capital Parks Cemetery.

To share condolences and memories with Mary's family, please visit [www.cookwaldencapitalparks.com](http://www.cookwaldencapitalparks.com).



**Virginia Ruth Baker Smith**, age 89, of Austin, passed away March 6, 2020, surrounded by her Daughter Debbie, granddaughter Meaghan and Caregiver and close friend, Rose, who all held her hand until her final breath.

Virginia was born on April 5, 1930 in Culver, Indiana, to the

late Dr. Maurice O. Baker and Bessie Ruth Baker. When she was four, her family moved to Houston where she grew up in the Garden Villas United Methodist Church. There she enjoyed attending Sunday school and many other Church functions. Growing up she also enjoyed school, dance, Rainbow Assemblies, and her Scottish Right Brigade at Stephen F. Austin High School. Following high school, Virginia attended the University of Texas at Austin where, in 1953, she received a degree in Education with a minor in Library Science. Even after college, she loved everything about U.T.! Virginia was a 1st and 2nd Grade teacher for Austin Independent School District for 36 years.

In the summer of 1954, Virginia met the love of her life, Eddie Smith, at the Eagle Rock Dude Ranch where she was waiting tables and Eddie was a chef. Eddie and Virginia married in 1954, and were blessed in marriage for 59 years, welcoming three children, four grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

Virginia was preceded in death by her husband Eddie Smith; parents, Maurice and Bessie Baker; a daughter Gina Marie Smith, who died at 3 months of age in 1960.

The family would like to thank Rose Vasquez of Lockhart who was a constant caregiver for Virginia during her last year of life. Rose was a friend who became a member of the family.

The family gathered to celebrate Virginia's life and will receive friends at a visitation on March 10th 2020. Funeral services were held at 10am on March 11, 2020, at Virginia's church, Memorial United Methodist Church, 6100 Berkman Dr, in Austin. Interment followed in Cook-Walden Memorial Hill Cemetery in Pflugerville.

Love & Concern go to Billy & Evelyn Capps on the passing of Evelyn's brother, **Darvel Lewis**. Darvel, age 82 of Johnston City, Ill. passed on February 25, 2020.



May God bless each family with comfort and good memories.



# *The Pastor's Corner*

## ***Worshipping "Together" for the next few weeks***

*And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old." (Matthew 13:52)*

In this verse, Jesus is talking about parables with his disciples (in the Gospel of Matthew, the disciples seem to have to have a lot more explained to them). But I think that it's instructive for us as well—we take Jesus' parables as a given. We speak and teach and learn in metaphors all the time. But we are constantly living in new realities as well, and we face new challenges in being able to live out our commitment to the Kingdom of God, which is God's constant in our lives.

Some of you may have a memory of different and wide-spread infections that have raced across the globe. Most of us won't remember the Spanish flu (but may have heard family stories about it), but many will remember the polio outbreaks of the 40s and 50s. There have been much smaller scale outbreaks across the globe, but COVID-19 seems to be a different "new" virus and on a scale that we haven't seen recently. We are justly and rightly trying to slow down the spread of this, and as such we will not be meeting for worship in person for the foreseeable future.

This makes me sad because we believe that being "in person" is a large part of why God became human and dwelt among us. Having been a part of virtual environments, I know that it easy to become "disembodied"—in other words, to forget that our bodies mean something to God. That's why in person worship is so important to make a priority. But for right now, that priority could endanger many of us and many who are around us. And so we adapt.

There are three ways to stay connected to worship that we will be offering:

Completely online through Facebook live (it didn't work on March 15, but we hope to be fully up and running by March 22). Simply go to the church's facebook page! I hope to incorporate music and opportunities for full participation as well as a chance to submit prayer requests. We are looking to churches that have a lot of tech capability to let us know what we can reasonably do, but this is also an opportunity for us to reach out to folks who may want to dip their toe in the water of a relationship with Jesus and with us.

Through a bi-weekly or weekly mailout of worship materials. This is a good option if you don't have access to the internet. We intend to include a devotion, a copy of the scripture and words to hymns as well as prayers. If you would like to do this, please fill out the form on the back of this newsletter or call the church and leave a message on our general line.

A hybrid of both. Maybe you're not on facebook or just don't have the capability of doing that because of less access to internet services. Each week, we will send out either a copy of the sermon or a video of Pastor Cynthia giving it, some links to youtube videos of Daniel playing hymns (with the words in the "see more" section so that you can sing along!) and an order of worship.

We don't know when we will hit our peak of exposure to this virus. Right now as I write this, gatherings of over 250 people (either public or private) have been suspended through May 1 in Austin, and the Center for Disease Control is recommending groups of 50 or more (10 or more if most of the people are over 60) suspend all get-togethers for the next 8 weeks.

While you may think this is an exaggeration, please know that when things spread exponentially, it can mean that we double or triple the number of people who contract this virus every single day. In Austin, there are 6 known positive cases. That could mean that by next week at this time, there could be 384 cases (if it simply doubled) and by the week following there could be over 49,000 (again, just doubling).

But like Noah kept sending out birds to check and see if there was dry land, we'll keep sending out messages of hope and counting on God to provide a sign that it is safe to gather again. In the meantime, we will continue our Wilderness Lenten journey AND look forward to the promise of resurrection which is always true, whether it arrives according to our calendar or not!

**Mission:** To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

**Vision:** A Christian community aspiring to live its mission with passion, generosity, and intentionality.

## ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF



Sunday Feb. 23, 2020 was a wonderful day after church in the gym. We celebrated our annual Chili Cook-off. The proceeds are used to help our Rainbow Class to go to Kingdom Camp at Cathedral Oaks near Schulenburg, Tx.

We want to thank Susan Froebel and Wanda Adams for organizing this event again. And thank each person who brought a container of chili or bought tickets and came to enjoy the food and fellowship.

We had about 11 pots of Chili for everyone to eat and later to vote on the one they like the most.

The Winners were:

3rd: "Old guy" Pat Marcum



2nd: "Cup of Heaven" Holly Wright



1st: "Taste of Heaven" Billie Nixon



It was a fun day and we hope it will be remembered as a good day for all.

**ENDING HUNGER  
ONE STEP  
AT A TIME  
CROP HUNGER WALK**

ATX CROP Hunger Walk Tops 2019 Total

First, thank you, Memorial UMC, for your support of the 2020 CROP Hunger Walk. The fact that you had walkers

warms my heart – so this is as much a personal thank you as it is an official expression of gratitude on behalf of the Walk organizers and CWS!

As of today, we know that the Walk will exceed the 2019 total of \$68,300. We will top \$70,000 and possibly exceed \$71,000! Numbers, of course, are just that – numbers. Each of those dollars represents food on a family table; a community garden; an animal that changes a family's life – a pig, chicken, and goat. Each of those dollars represents love and caring by people like you!

I do want to say a word about the hottest topic around: COVID-19. CWS has been monitoring the spread of this virus globally. We have staff who are in affected countries. In the U.S., Spring CROP Hunger Walks are already being impacted. The Durham, NC Walk venue is Duke University – one of the largest walks in the nation. Duke has made a prudent decision to stop any large gatherings on campus. What we do know at this time is local groups – Food Banks, church pantries, community gardens, small scale farming efforts – will be impacted. "Local" means our own Central Texas Food Bank, Casa Marianella, Hope Food Pantry, Urban Roots, iACT for Refugees, Micah 6 and Mt. Olive Food Pantry. Local also means a family awaiting clean water in West Timor; a refugee family in Cairo in need of a voucher for food. In the end, it's all local. As a United Methodist, I return again and again to John Wesley: The world is my (our) parish.

If you haven't had an opportunity to support Pastor Cynthia or one of your other walkers, please do so today. You may give a walker cash or a check or make a donation online at [www.crophungerwalk.org/austintx](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/austintx)

Thank you again for your support of the 2020 ATX CROP Hunger Walk!

Kevin Murphy, Community Engagement Manager  
Church World Service

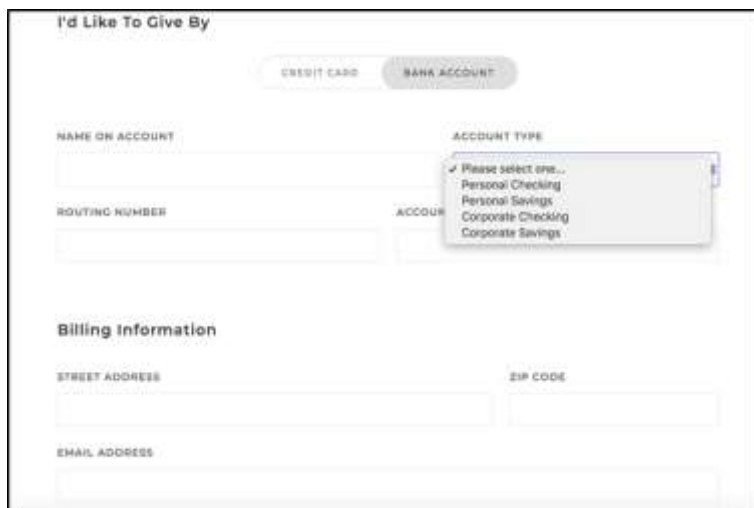
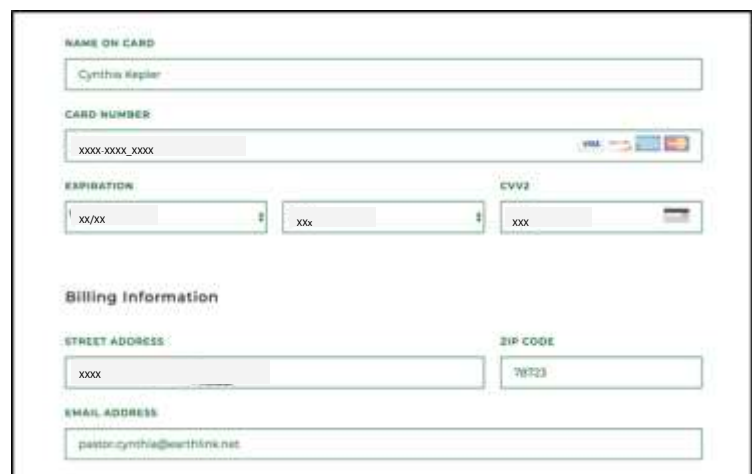
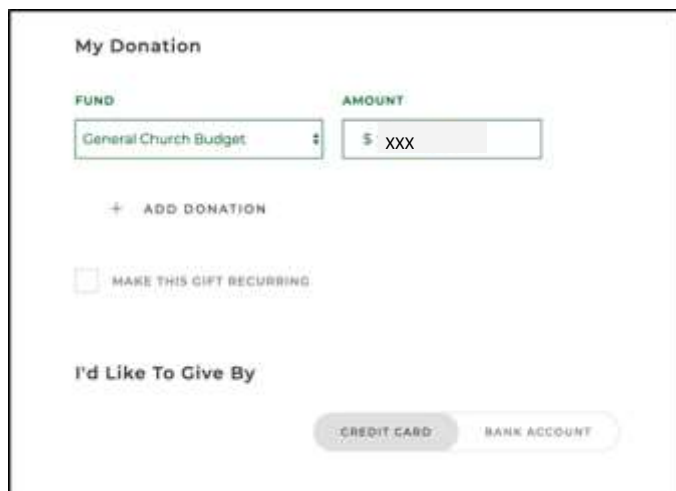


**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**

## Giving options while church is not meeting “in-person”.

Continuing to support the church as ministries move online and into the virtual realm is something that all of us are paying attention to now! Many folks in our congregation have not chosen to take advantage of our online giving portal, but other than sending a check to the church through the mail (always a valid option!), online giving can be a helpful way to send donations to the church. We have two options for online giving right now—credit card or bank account draw. None of your account information is saved (unless you click the recurring donation button), and this is a secure way to give.

If you aren't sure how this works, here are some images of what happens when you click on the online giving portal (a little ways down the front page of the website): Basically, you input the amount you would like to give (don't worry about the add donation button—it just gives you an extra box for a second donation). Then select whether you'd like to give through a credit card or directly from the bank account. Then input that information and you're all set!



Suggestions for you and your family—

- Each week during a time of worship, take time to actually either prepare a letter to mail with a pledge or gift or to go online
- Continue to make use of offertory prayers or scriptures that remind us to be generous as we are able. Some websites that have prayers are:

<http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/> (most of the way down the page), <https://umfmichigan.org/weekly-offertory-prayer/> (the prayers Pastor Cynthia uses each week)

Scriptures include: 2 Corinthians 9:7, 1 Corinthians 13:3, Proverbs 3:9, Proverbs 3:27, Luke 6:30, 1 Chronicles 29:14, 2 Corinthians 9:11, Luke 6:38 and many others

- Continue to think about generosity in other ways too: checking in on neighbors or on folks in the church by phone, being generous of spirit with folks who are having a rough time coping, and being generous with yourself if you do get sick and need to ask for help!



**Wesley School**

A weekday ministry of the Memorial United Methodist Church

**Until further notice, all in-person events, church meetings and discipleship/worship meetings at Memorial UMC have been cancelled/postponed or moved online.**

## Wesley School update



Right now, child care is considered a semi-essential service to provide in the community, so the Wesley School is remaining open, under the guidance of both the CDC and the Texas Department of Human Health and Services, who have issued strict guidelines for the continued running of the school.

Sunday Morning  
Flower  
Arrangements and  
Easter Lilies



Please know that even before these guidelines were issued, the school was taking every precaution, mandating frequent handwashing beyond what they normally do and daily sanitization of various areas. Sometimes the teachers are even coming up on weekends to make sure they have the best knowledge and their classrooms are clean. They have indefinitely postponed their spring fundraiser

It is unlikely that even if we are able to return for services on April 12 that we will have time or access to order Easter lilies. I am grateful for the folks who planted some of our leftover lilies in the back flower bed—so I will encourage us to enjoy them there! When we are able to have our first service back, we will want to bring any flowers from our gardens or even silk flowers for our flowering cross.

We do envision a time when the state of Texas or the city of Austin may need to close even these areas, so we are preparing for that. We hope you will keep the Wesley staff, kids and families in your prayers.

## Wesley School Talent Show & Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser is postponed.



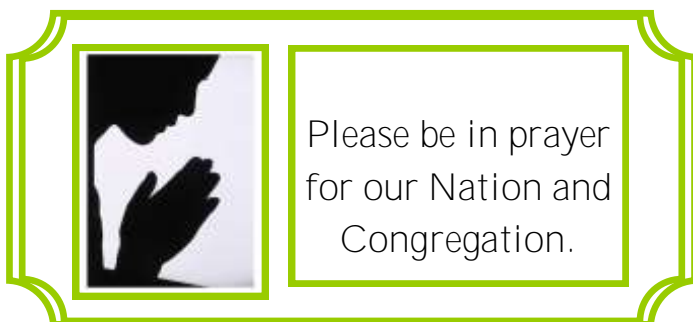
In addition, if you have placed an order for Sunday morning flower arrangements and have already paid for them, we'll be contacting you to see if you'd like to postpone your date for flowers until we are back in the sanctuary or if you'd like us to issue you a refund.





# April Birthdays

- 2nd Stephanie Shelton Walker
- 3rd Zora Mae Hise
- 7th David Paul Teaney  
Christina Williams
- 8th Ava Baccus-Knowles
- 9th John Shelton
- 13th Michael Shelton
- 18th Jennifer Eddleman  
Debbie Schmidt Parsley  
Victoria Purtle
- 19th William Dennig
- 20th Lucas Benavides
- 21st Russell Moore
- 22nd Betty Moore
- 23rd Laura Rhoades Smith
- 24th Lauren Michele Dennig  
Glenda Houston
- 27th Lela Barker  
Jacob Shelton  
Sarah Shelton
- 29th Wes Walker
- 30th Jane Friedrich



## Prayer For a Pandemic

May we who are merely inconvenienced  
Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors  
Remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home  
Remember those who must choose between  
preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children  
when their schools close  
Remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips  
Remember those that have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money  
in the tumult of the economic market  
Remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home  
Remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country,  
Let us choose love.

During this time when we cannot physically  
wrap our arms around each other,  
Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God  
to our neighbors.

Amen.

~~Cameron Wiggins Belm



## Worship Input!

As we prepare resources for people to worship at home, we would love to have your input! If you are willing to be in contact with us through email or phone with ideas for hymns, stories and other resources we can provide people with for the various scriptures, please let us know! Pastor Cynthia will be working with Daniel and Kayce others to produce both online resources and resources that can be mailed to people for personal use. To participate, call the office at 512-452-5796 (we have a way to check messages, even remotely!) or Pastor Cynthia at 512-921-3473.

## How To Stay Connected

We will be updating the website: [www.memorialumcaustin.com](http://www.memorialumcaustin.com) as we are able, and sending out emails like normal and mailing to those who don't have computers or smart phones, in order to keep you informed.

Please Send us Updated information on how you would like to be contacted. Clearly Email is the quickest form of communication. If you get our prayer email already, then you will get all our updates. You may print/scan and email this info or call in your request for worship materials.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like Worship Materials physically mailed to me. \_\_\_\_\_



Check Here

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