

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 9:30-10:15 a.m.

Worship - 11:00 a.m.

Find all our Newsletters on our

Web site: www.memorialumcaustin.com

Find us on Facebook at

Memorial United Methodist Church-Austin

Email:

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January 2022



Epiphany Sunday January 2

Epiphany celebrates the coming of the Magi to worship Jesus. At the first of the year, we also take time to renew our covenant with God, a Wesleyan tradition. Join us for this special service as we talk about choosing to go home a different road.



Baptism of the Lord January 9

The Sunday following Epiphany is almost always when we celebrate Jesus' baptism. It is also an appropriate day for baptisms and renewals of baptism. If you have not been baptized and wish to be, please let Pastor Cynthia know immediately so that she can meet with you to discuss this important gift from God in a life of faith.



News From pews



January Birthdays

- 1 Jean Breazeale
- 2 Candy Valentine
- 4 Jeremy Mohler
- 5 Bambi Teaney
- 8 Mary Bryant
- 11 Johnie Madison
- 12 Kay Dunbar
Matthew Shelton
- 13 Kendall Smith
- 16 Carl Helge
Travis Purtle
- 17 James Shelton
- 21 Clay Ericson
- 23 Connie Tatom
- 26 Steve Jourdan
- 31 Kirk Amundson

A Change of Pace for Billie

Billie Nixon is retiring from her job, but not from the church.




On Sunday, December 12, one day after Memorial's 148th anniversary, we held a celebration of Billie's 55+ years of service as Memorial's membership coordinator, a position that has gone far beyond its original job description.

After a reception in the parlor (our first since March 2020!) which was accompanied by a video of well-wishes for Billie, we moved to the worship service. We worshiped God together, as Billie and her family, many of whom made special arrangements to be there for the occasion, had done since 1963.

Early in the service, we had a special time of giving God thanks for gifting us with such a special person, and Billie came up to address the gathered congregation, overflowing with gratitude. And while she noted that there used to be more people in the pews (she knew because it was her job to visit them all!), she reminded us that it is the work of the whole church to build it up again.

Billie described how her husband John had also been working during her career, both of them supporting each other. She also took special care to acknowledge her children and their families and how much their support had meant to her—what a joy it was to watch them grow up in the church.

“We’ve had some good days behind us,” Billie concluded. “And I know we’ll have some good days ahead of us.” We pray that Billie’s words and all of the work that she has done among us to care for us will inspire us all to be a part of making that happen! Thank you, Billie, and we look forward to all that God has for us yet to come.



Youth Schedule

Jan. 9th 6-8pm in the Youth Room & Gym

Thursday January 27 Worship at Texas Wesley - District Youth Event 6

Youth Lock-in

January 21st– January 22nd

8pm-6 am Overnight in the Gym



Finance Update

We are grateful to God for the resources He has provided for all the ministries here at Memorial UMC. Thank you for your part in this! Our Finance Team and other leaders have worked diligently to close the gap between expenses and income but a significant shortfall remains. Please prayerfully consider an end of year gift to help us meet this need!

New Series Jan. 16th “Illuminated”



Bread Church

**January 20th
7pm Gym Kitchen**

Financial Moves



We are so grateful that many people in our congregation have chosen to give online over this past year—and now we’re making a move to align that giving with our church management program, Breeze.

If you are a regular donor to Memorial, especially if you have blessed us by setting up an automatic gift, you will be receiving instructions in the mail as to how to migrate your gift from E-zekiel to Breeze (setting up your account on Breeze and discontinuing from E-zekiel). There will also be more information about the Breeze platform and a new feature—Text to Give. If you have any questions, contact the office and someone from our Finance Team will be in touch.



**Cookie Sales
Begin
Jan.19th -
Feb. 27th**

See Alberta for more info on how to support Memorial’s House Troop 172 in their cookies sales effort. See <https://www.gsctx.org/en/cookies/about-girl-scout-cookies.html> for where to buy in your area.

**2022 New
Cookie**





**Is Serving
Others
One of
Your 2021**

New Year’s Resolutions?

If you would like to serve more in the upcoming year, Senior Access is looking for volunteers that can help provide transportation and other essential services for seniors who are no longer able to drive for themselves. Learn how you can serve by contacting Sherrie at 512-310-1060 or visit sherrie@senioracesstx.org.



Calling all volunteers! We’re in need of drivers at our Central Kitchen, St. Marks, Memorial United Methodist, Round Rock Grace and Pflugerville sites. If you, or someone you know in these area neighborhoods, would be interested in volunteering one hour of their time, we have plenty of opportunity to help!

Please call 737-218-4260 or email volunteer@mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org for any questions.

**Austin’s
CROP
Hunger
Walk Returns to Camp Mabry on
March 6th**



We are pleased to announce that the Austin CROP Hunger Walk will offer both an in-person event at Camp Mabry and the option (as in 2021) for teams and individual walkers to set their own walk site, date and time.

The Mabry event will be Sunday, March 6, beginning at 1:30 pm. This event will be a “slimmed down” version of past Mabry events in order to ensure physical safety and distancing. Participants may show up and immediately begin their walk – on our new walking route! Church World Service and our volunteer event organizers will observe all Mabry and municipal health directives.

For those who wish to participate as they did in 2021, resources will be available to help make their event(s) enjoyable and meaningful.

Other key dates:

Saturday, January 15: Packet pick-up: materials may be picked up here at Memorial UMC, 10 am to Noon.

Saturday, January 29: Team Captain Information Session, 10 am to 11 am (ZOOM)

Monday, January 31: Team Captain Information Session, 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm (ZOOM)

Participants may select one of the Team Captain Info Sessions.

In 2021, the Walk raised over \$81,500 – in a pandemic year, an increase of more than \$5,000! Our goal is to raise \$83,000 in 2022. You can help.

Kevin Murphy,
Austin CROP Hunger Walk Coach



CWS
Church World Service



The Pastor's Corner

At the end of the year, it is time to give an account of ministry over the last year. And while there are forms that ask what I did in terms of the official work of a pastor, I want to give a wider accounting because 2021 has been a *very strange and wonderful year*.

I continue to be grateful that I was able to plan for and take renewal leave during September and October. It was a time to rest and recover and build hope about what God might be doing next in me and in the church. I am sure that I will continue to speak about both the value to me of that time as well as the ways in which circumstances fell into place that made it a value to the congregation as well.

One of those circumstances was the gift of having Pastor Allison Angell with us this summer and on-call for pastoral care in the fall. Her presence was re-invigorating to the congregation, and as we were beginning to come back together through vaccines and careful worship plans, we found great joy in getting to know her and her family as well as watching her discover her own calling. I am so very grateful to both Allison and the congregation for coming together in such a hope-filled way!

But there were two unique opportunities that came along and offered a significantly different way to do ministry, including being able to reflect on ministry through the lenses they provided.

The first was service on a Travis County grand jury from mid-January through the end of June. In early January, I was selected from a pool of Travis Co. residents to be one of 12 jurors on one of 3 concurrent grand juries, which handle all felony cases in Travis Co. other than police-involved ones (which are handled by a special grand jury). Over the course of the six months, our jury heard over 800 cases, deciding whether or not there was enough evidence to indict.

It was good work. Heavy work. Hard work. Sometimes frustrating and infuriating work. The vast majority of what we heard was either third offense DWIs or domestic violence cases—these two categories together made up about 80-85% of what was presented to us. Please don't drink/do drugs and drive. If you or someone you love is in an abusive relationship, please give them courage and strength to get help. I found that having some concrete action to take gave me a different feeling than simply praying for a situation (though I spent time after our sessions were over praying), and it reminded me that our community is as much in need of ministries of our hands as it is of our hearts.

The second opportunity was the chance to serve as a United Methodist ministerial consultant on an HBOMAX miniseries that is being filmed here in the Austin area. The subject matter is a true crime that happened in 1980 in the Dallas area and involved people who knew each other through the local United Methodist Church.

Though there are lots of things I can't talk about (I had to sign a really tight non-disclosure agreement my first day!), I was really moved and impressed by the way the cast and crew and especially the director wanted the scenes that had religious content to be authentic and meaningful. Everyone from the cast to the set decorations crew to the costumers to the music people had questions for me and valued the knowledge that I have built up over the years about UM culture and worship practices.

But even more than that—they were willing to share how their particular skill or knowledge area helps to tell a story. And I realized that we have a lot of things in common—I'm always looking for how I can tell a Biblical story with more effectiveness. The cast and crew reminded me that the best story-telling isn't done with one person, but with a whole group of people, working together to tell it well. They are great people, and I hope that I can maintain these relationships even after filming is done.

My 2021 has been strangely shaped—and that was even before we started talking about all of the ways in which we are learning to manage and mitigate COVID! But I hope that by seeing the world through these different lenses, through this different pattern of work and relationship, I might better know how to tell Christ's story in our congregation and in our neighborhood. I might be aware of issues and perspectives that I hadn't considered before. And I hope that you will ask me if am I still learning how to be an ambassador for Jesus, how to use my hands as well as my heart and head, and how to be present to congregants and neighbors alike.

Wesley Rec Basketball



Beginning January 7th
Fridays 3:30-5:30pm in the Gym
Contact Kendall for more details.



United
Methodist
Women

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

**United Methodist Women
is back!**

2nd Wednesday at 10:30am
in the Parlor

