



Toward the Light on Christmas Eve

It is a holy night and this year at University Christian Church, we invite you to partake in the light of the Christ Child in four unique worship services, each one designed with scripture, song, light and story to bring us closer to the stable.

During all of our Advent services we will have sung the ninth-century Latin hymn *Creator of the Stars of Night* which calls us on toward the everlasting light.

4 and 6 p.m. are family services, in our Sanctuary, featuring the retelling of the Christmas story from the perspective of several angels, live animals and the Holy Family. These services are designed for worshippers of all ages! Music will feature a harpist and our youth bell choirs providing music, with carols for the congregation. As in years past, the children will have a special opportunity to engage with the star of light in the service. At the 6 p.m. service, communion will be served and adults will have an opportunity to light candles.

8 p.m. is our alternative service in Fellowship Hall with *The Search* band. Candles, visuals, interactive prayer encounters and art stations are a few of the unique ways to explore the meaning of Christmas in this multisensory service. This service also features communion. Dr. Suzanne Castle will preach and this year, each worshipper will receive a special CD from the band as a gift to be given to someone.

11 p.m. is the traditional, classic service in our Sanctuary. The organ and harp will be featured in a half hour prelude. Our Chancel Choir and Ad Deum Handbell Choir will lead congregational singing. Rev. Larry Thomas will preach this service, and we will close with the singing of *Silent Night* and lifting our candles together.

On Christmas Eve, draw near with us as we experience light and wonder.

Smile! UCC Wants Your Picture!

The last pictorial directory of our congregation was published in 2008. It's time for a new one. We began the process by asking for your help in updating and verifying contact and family information and many of you have responded. Thank you.

Now we're ready for the next step—the pictures! Once again, we need your help. Past pictorial directories have relied on the services of a professional photographer and a photo appointment. With digital technology, we can now do the picture-taking for ourselves and the coming Christmas season offers the perfect opportunity.

Members of the Communications Committee will be taking pictures of members and families on four Sundays in December and January: December 22 and 29, January 5 and 12. What do you need to do? We know you'll be here one or more of those Sundays. Look for one of several picture stations around the building—follow the signs—and get your picture taken. It couldn't be easier. If you already have a digital photo that you'd like us to use, we'll tell you at the picture station how to send it to us. If you want to do more, volunteer to help as a photographer or photographer's helper by contacting Meg Lehman at meg_k_lehman@yahoo.com. Say cheese!

Stay Connected!

Traditional Worship
Sundays, 9 & 11 a.m.

The Search **Alternative Worship**
Sundays, 5 p.m.

Live broadcast of 11 a.m. service
on KTCU FM 88.7
or on our **website**
at www.universitychristian.org



The Vision of University Christian Church

Living the Good News of Jesus Christ with open minds and loving hearts



Silence and Grace

by Rev. Larry Thomas, Senior Minister

I love silence. It is one of the things I enjoy most about the outdoors. I relish those long days wherein the only

thing I hear is the wind in the trees and the chirp of insects as evening falls.

Our Sanctuary also provides me with a temporary respite from the clamor of a busy life. One cannot escape the occasional emergency vehicle passing by; otherwise it is still and peaceful. Both experiences; the out of doors and the Sanctuary offer the space needed to decompress, relax, pray and prioritize.

A dear friend gave me a book several years ago that I cherish. The title is *Silence*. The author is Robert Sardello. It

is one of the books I carry with me into my times of silence. What follows is an excerpt I want to share with you.

When we have cleared a space for the presence of Silence to enter into whatever we are doing, we feel the presence of grace in our lives. When we have gotten to the point of feeling the desire of Silence and can call to heart that feeling when we are about to begin our day and our work, we feel graced. Grace is a second alteration of the soul that comes through the work of clearing. Grace is the permeation of our soul with divine love. It is a very palpable bodily feeling. It feels as if we are accompanied by radiance, and in the midst of such radiance we radiate a glow. Sometimes others can even see or intuit the presence of this glow.

Advent is a busy time for most. There are

many extra yet wonderful things to do. It really is a grand and uplifting season.

The holidays can be consuming as well. It is not an uncommon occurrence to look upon people and recognize the telltale signs of exhaustion. When I need to regain my balance during the pre-Christmas rush, I slip into our Sanctuary, light the Crismon Tree and sit in silence. The gentle glow of the lights and the peace I find in that sacred space enable me to revisit a quiet center where important things reside.

If you have not tried it, take a moment out of a busy day and discover peaceful space at UCC. You will not regret the effort, especially during the season of Advent. You too may rediscover the radiance of God's divine love and grace.

38th Annual Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival



Exciting News!

The UCC Music Ministry and the Boar's Head Guild are excited to announce that Randol Alan Bass will conduct the Fort Worth Civic Orchestra at this year's BHYL Festival. Mr. Bass, the original composer of

UCC's BHYL Festival music, has spent 2013 adding additional depth to the orchestra, organ and choral pieces. We look forward to sharing his work with you. Mr. Bass originally composed the music as a young University of Texas graduate in 1976-77, at the request of UCC Choirmaster, Ron Shirey. We hope you will join us to hear all the beloved traditional music compositions that will have a richer and deeper sound.

Performances & Ticket Sales

The 38th Annual Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival will be held in the Sanctuary on January 4 and 5, 2014 at 3 and 5 p.m. each day. Mark your calendars and plan on attending this UCC tradition.



Plenty of free seats are available and patron tickets for reserved seating are available for \$15 per seat and all proceeds go to sustaining the festival in future years. Beginning December 2, you may order your

patron tickets through our website at www.universitychristian.org, call the ticket office at 817.926.6631 ext. 141 or email boarshead@uccftw.com.



Spot Rehearsal Change

Spot rehearsals are normally held on the Tuesday and Wednesday during the week prior to the festival. This year, the New Year's Eve Holiday (December 31) falls on Tuesday and the youth are returning from their ski trip on this night. To address these conflicts, we will combine both spot rehearsals into a single night on Wednesday, January 1.

UCC Journal

Carol Ann Fewell, Editor • Michelle Groom, Circulation

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The \$15 annual subscription to the UCC Journal is paid through members annual tithes and individually paid subscribers.

Visit us on the web at www.universitychristian.org for more information.

'Tis the Season for Singing

by Mary Farmer, UCC Children's Choir Director



Our UCC Children's Choirs are proud to present their second annual Christmas Concert. The children have been rehearsing and working hard to bring you a wonderful holiday concert this season. Last year's concert was glorious and so well attended by the congregation. The concert will take place on Sunday, December 15, at 12:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. A light snack lunch will be provided in Room 207 after the 11 a.m. service so you may grab a bite to eat and then go back to the Sanctuary to enjoy the music.

The children's music will include Christmas anthems that have percussion, guitar and piano accompaniment. Our wonderful piano accompanist, Wanting Zhao, is a piano student at TCU and

a very fine pianist. She has been accompanying our children's choirs for the past three years and is a blessing to the children. This concert will also feature our Assistant Chancel Choir Director, Jackson Yandell, singing a bass solo in one of the children's Christmas anthems. They will also lead a fun sing-a-long where all can participate.

The children have had a great time learning our new and many other favorite Christmas carols and hymns. They will certainly make a joyful noise! We love that this congregational concert has become an annual event that supports our Children's Choirs and helps us celebrate this meaningful season together. Please plan to attend on Sunday, December 15.

Christmas Special Offering



2013 Christmas Offering
for Regional Ministries
December 15 and 22

www.disciplesmissionfund.org

Matthew's story of the Wise Men who come seeking the newborn King is a familiar one re-enacted in countless Christmas pageants every year. Amidst the costumes, animals, shepherds and

mangers crowded into most depictions of the Nativity, the gifts they bring often are seen as just props for the Magi to carry. But they were extravagant gifts fit for a King. We may think ourselves incapable of giving such gifts until we remember that the good news of Jesus' birth also came to common folk like the shepherds, and that extravagance comes in many forms. For the shepherds, it came in the form of praising God. For you, maybe it will be in doing mission together in response to a disaster or going on an immersion trip to learn about another culture.

Your extravagant gift to the Christmas offering, whether large or small, supports the many ways Disciples across the Southwest Region discover and share their gifts of ministry. Special offering envelopes will be available on December 15 and 22.

Life of the Church

Births

Emma Michelle Green, granddaughter of Karen and David Vanderwerken, born November 6. Uncle is Eric Vanderwerken; parents are Greg and Sherry Green of San Diego.

Deaths

Graylin Smith, November 5
Nephew of Lorraine Stell

Gary Lee, November 5
Brother of Bob Lee

Dr. Cortell Holsapple
November 4

Robert Louise "Bobbie" Pool, October 26
Grandmother of Jake Yarbrough

Bill McClure, October 23
Husband of Jan McClure

Paul Straw, October 23
Cousin of Steve Mosher

Mary Ann Gallagher, October 18
Mother of Jay Gallagher

Wilbur Johnston, October 18
Father of Michael Johnston

Weddings

Lauren Traylor/Keith Wawrzeniak
November 8

Sara Murray/Daniel Wall
November 9

Meagan Myers/Michael Kelly
November 16

Lauren Newman/John Synowsky
November 23

New Members



Geoffrey and Michelle George are excited to become a part of UCC and look forward to getting involved in the church. Geoffrey is a drafter at Freeman Audio Visual, and Michelle teaches choir and theater at Southwest Christian School. They have been married almost three years. They enjoy good food, travel, and anything related to art and music.



Welcome Lynn King. Lynn's master's degree from TCU is in music, and it was the amazing music program, plus the outreach opportunities UCC offers that made her want to become a member. Lynn participated in our most recent Nicaragua Mission Pilgrimage. She is a kindergarten teacher in Lake Worth. Lynn has two grown children.



Welcome Kyle and Lindsay Klatzkin. Kyle is a University of Texas graduate and currently works at LGM Finance Companies. Lindsay is a graduate of the University of North Texas and is a non-profit consultant and community volunteer. Lindsay and Kyle are happy to call UCC their church home and look forward to getting involved. Kyle and Lindsay will welcome their first child in January.



Neighborhood friends invited Marty Johnson to visit UCC and gratefully, Marty is now excited to be a new member. She looks forward to worship on Sundays, attending Bible study, getting involved with church programs and fellowship. Marty has been in the real estate business over twenty years, owns her own company and is a real estate appraiser and real estate broker. When Marty is not working she enjoys photography, riding horses, dancing and helping others.



Don Rosenberger retired from Texaco after 37 years of service and is a Veteran of World War II and Korea. He is also a private pilot. Don sang professionally for many years in church choirs directed by his wife, Dorothy, who taught at The University of Buffalo as a teacher/performer for many years and was soprano soloist with 27 leading contemporary composers. She is an accomplished pianist, harpsichordist and choral director. Dorothy and Don have two children and four grandchildren and are enjoying UCC and being close to their family.



Newcomers Class

All are welcome to be a part of the Newcomers Class! Join us Sundays, January 5, 12 and 19 at 10 a.m. in Room 201. Take this opportunity to invite a friend to learn more about UCC.

The Newcomers Class provides an opportunity to get to know others, meet Rev. Thomas, learn about UCC and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and tour the building. Questions are always welcome.

For information, contact Michelle Groom, Ministry Assistant to Rev. Cyndy Twedell, at 817.926.6631 ext. 138, or email mgroom@uccftw.com.

Annual Film Festival

Mark your calendars now for the 11th annual Reel Religion Film Festival
January 24-25, held at UCC!

UCC Women

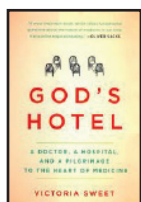


Mark your calendar for these special upcoming events and join us for your regular favorite women's activities!

Regift Game Night

Friday, January 10, 6 p.m.

Bring a \$10ish gift to regift and a snack to share to Diane Hawley's house and enjoy an evening of games regifting fun.



WILD Women Book Club Evening Edition

Monday, January 20, 6 p.m.

WILD Lunch Gathering

Tuesday, January 21, 11:30 a.m., UCC Library. We will discuss the book *God's Hotel* by Victoria Sweet (both evening edition and Tuesday WILD will discuss the same book).

Women's Circles

First Tuesday October through May
Join us December 3:

Lily of the Valley Circle
Home of Grace Adams
3812 Candlelite Ct – 76109

Rose Circle
Hostess: Sharon Edwards
3241 Rosemeade Dr (Club House)

Women of Valor

Usually the second Sunday evening each month, 6 p.m. in Room 204
On Sunday, December 8, we'll gather for fellowship and continue conversation of the book, *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor.



Cup of Blessing Bible Study

Each Thursday (through December 12) at 11:30 a.m., bring your bag lunch and join the group as they explore the Acts of the Apostles. We will begin meeting again on January 9, 2014.



Latte with the Ladies

Saturday, December 14, beginning at 9 a.m., Agape Coffee Haus in Aledo (108 Jearl St 76087). Afterwards join us for shopping in Aledo!

Women's Retreat

Friday, February 28–Saturday, March 1
We will carpool from UCC to the Disciples Crossing in Athens on Friday afternoon, spend the night there then enjoy a day at Canton shopping!



Quadrennial Assembly

June 25-29, Atlanta, GA
Women from around the world come together every four years at the Quadrennial Assembly to be renewed, inspired and transformed. Join us! Register on the web at www.discipleswomen.org.

Women's Ministries engages women in meaningful enrichment, spiritual growth, study and worship while advocating for and reaching out to women in our community and around the world. For more information about Women's Ministries please contact Cyndy Twedell, Associate Minister, 817.926.6631.



Daily Devotionals for Adults

Daily devotions for Advent will be available on December 1. This year, our overall theme is *Toward the Light*. Choose from *The Bright Star of Bethlehem, A World Awaits* by C.S. Lewis and *Elements of Advent* by Ron Glusenkamp; all chosen as daily reflections so that we may be aware of ways to be a light to all of God's people this Advent and always.

Save the Date!

Mime Boot Camp Theatre Performance Workshop, featuring internationally known Dr. Lou Campbell (Former National Endowment for the Humanities Professor) will be held here at UCC on February 16 in Fellowship Hall! Limited spots are available for ages fifteen and above. Registrations will be online beginning December 15. \$45 for this 10 a.m.-5 p.m. workshop.
More details coming in the January Journal!

Friday Fellowship



Christmas is fast approaching, which calls for a special holiday program. Jeanette Kiem will help us celebrate with beautiful piano music, and Rev. Dr.

Eldon Irving will entice us with one of his favorite Christmas stories while we enjoy fellowship and a catered meal at no cost.

We meet Friday, December 13, with lunch beginning at 11 a.m. in Fellowship Hall followed by our program. R.S.V.P.'s are needed by Wednesday, December 11. Contact Jennifer at 817.926.6631 for reservation.



Need a Special Gift?

The Arches Bookstore has a selection of uniquely-UCC gift items.

Open for Christmas Shopping:
Sunday, December 1,
and Sunday, December 8.

Will There be Room in the Inn?

by Carol Stewart, RITI team member



When Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem, they were homeless, if only for a few days. They must have been quite relieved when an innkeeper was kind enough to give them a place to stay. This year, Christmas falls on a Wednesday, UCC's night for hosting ten homeless men for dinner, a peaceful night's rest and a hearty breakfast the

next morning. Everyone I've talked with is enthusiastically in favor of keeping our Room in the Inn program open on Christmas Day. But it takes more than affirming that we just *couldn't* close the inn on the day we celebrate the love of Jesus coming into the world. We need drivers to transport our guests to or from the Day Resource Center, cooks to prepare the food, hosts to make everyone feel welcome, people to serve the meal, innkeepers to spend the night, breakfast chefs and people who will set up and clean up.

If you'd like to make Christmas a warm and festive day for our guests, sign up

now to take a one-three hour shift on December 25 or 26. If you're receiving RITI emails from Dean Pauley, click on the link to pick your spots. Your help is needed throughout December, January and February. If you aren't on the RITI list but would like to sign up, contact carolmstewart@sbcglobal.net or deanop1121@gmail.com.

We must have a full slate of volunteers by December 11. We don't want to have to inform the Day Resource Center that they can't send anyone to us on Christmas Day. Please help us keep our inn open to those who need it most.

Home for the Holidays



Chestnuts roasting on an open fire... Jack Frost nipping at your nose... Holiday music sparks thoughts of celebration, laughter and gatherings of family and friends.

For some, however, the holidays can be a time of loneliness and depression—especially for those just getting back on their feet after a time of being homeless.

A wonderful event is happening December 12 at University Christian Church for formerly homeless people now off the streets and working to change their lives. Tarrant Area Community of Churches and University Christian Church are partnering with the City of Fort Worth to provide a holiday meal for those placed in housing through the *Directions Home* program. Many of them don't have families to celebrate the holidays with. Can you provide a 9x12" roasting pan of mashed or sweet potatoes, green beans and/or stuffing for the 11:30 a.m. lunch on December

12 or donate items such as dish towels, plastic or metal cooking spoons and/or sponges for goodie bags? All it takes to participate is a call to Tarrant Area Community of Churches (817.737.5554) saying what you will bring.

And if you would like to extend our University Christian Church hospitality by greeting our guests, serving, or helping with clean up or set up, contact Cyndy Twedell. You are welcome to stay to eat and celebrate!

Donations for door prizes will be received until December 5: new household items like sheet sets, detergent and laundry basket, dish towels, clock radios, etc.

Christmas Angels



Christmas Angels Wrap Night is Tuesday, December 10, at 6 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Join us as we assemble bags containing a coat, sweatshirt, jeans and shoes, a Bible, book and toy, along with an Angel Blessing Card for almost 550 FWISD children in fourteen different schools. Childcare for birth through four years is available but reservations are necessary. Contact Ann Bowling at 817.926.6631 ext. 159 by Friday, December 6.

It is not too late to make a donation. One gift bag costs approximately \$80, but any donation amount will help make Christmas special for a child in our community. Flyers for donations are available at the Reception Desk and The Arches Information Desk. Donations can also be made through Gifts of Hope or on line at the UCC web site.

Missionary Commissioning



UCC's Kristine Tisinger flew to Ghana on November 19 to begin her missionary service there. Participating in her October 27 Commissioning Service were David Owen, Associate for Resource Development of the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church, Rev. Larry Thomas, Senior Minister, and Esther Lee, Board Chair of the Division of Overseas Ministries and Co-Chair of the Global Ministries Board.

Habitat for Humanity Fall Build Dedication

Tuesday, December 10

Join us at 6 p.m. at Cendera Center in Fort Worth, 3600 Benbrook Highway, 76116. A complimentary buffet dinner will be provided as Habitat thanks the families, sponsors and volunteers that help make Trinity Habitat work.

If you plan to attend, please let Cyndy Twedell know so she can make UCC's reservation with Habitat. We will present the key to the new home owner, Will Lewis.



Christmas Poinsettias

Beautiful red poinsettias complement the greenery in our Sanctuary during Advent and are a wonderful way to celebrate, remember, honor or appreciate the special people or events in your life. Plants are \$25 each and orders may be placed through December 15. Poinsettias

are available to take home following the 11 p.m. Christmas Eve service. Order online or pick up an order form at the Reception Desk or Arches Information Desk. Contact pam@uccftw.com for assistance.

A Prayer Shawl Story



One of our regular prayer shawl participants shares a lovely story from a shawl recipient:

A woman I made a prayer shawl for was caring for her grandson who was teething and could not be comforted and only wanted to be held while she stood. Obviously she was getting very tired. She got the shawl and wrapped it

around him and it soothed him and she could sit down.

Then she put him in his bed and covered him with the shawl and he fell asleep. She said she believes we are all comforted when we are wrapped in prayers.

UCC's Prayer Shawl ministry is open to all who would like to part of this amazing work. Have you always wanted to learn to knit or crochet? One of our

experienced knitters or crocheters would be happy to teach you. Join us Wednesdays at 11 a.m. or Sundays at 4 p.m. in Room 206.

Each prayer shawl is prayerfully knit together and then specifically prayed for before it is presented to someone who needs to be wrapped in God's love during times of celebration, transition or difficulty.



Caring for God's Creation

Caring for God's Creation (CFGFC) will meet with members of the Fort Worth Chapter of Interfaith Power and Light to view the documentary *BagIt* on Thursday, December 12, at 7 p.m. in the Journey Land movie theater. A presentation by John McFarlane of the Fort Worth Sierra Club will follow. CFGFC is joining the effort to have the city of Fort Worth adopt restrictions on single-use plastic bags.

Sunday School Happenings

College Breakfast, December 22

A chance for our students away to reconnect with each other as they're home for the holidays. All college students are welcome to gather at 10 a.m. in the College Lounge (Room 223) for a reunion breakfast. Please make sure your college student knows about this chance to catch up and connect!

Holiday Brunch, December 29

No classes will meet the Sunday after Christmas. Instead, we will have a church wide brunch during the Sunday

school hour in Room 207. Beverages will be provided. We just ask that you bring a breakfast dish to share. All ages welcome, preschool childcare is available.

Boar's Head *Behind the Scenes*, January 5

Ever find yourself wondering, "What's a yule log?" or "Why do those men stomp down the aisle in the Sanctuary?" Have you experienced the "awe" of Boar's Head, yet don't know how to explain the event to friends? Are you new to UCC and have heard stories about this

annual event, but want to learn more?

Then you're invited to a special presentation by Dr. Harry Parker, LaLonnie Lehman and others deeply involved with the production over the years. The panel will discuss the history of Boar's Head at UCC, the significance of the story, and will allow time for a question and answer session. Join us in Fellowship Hall at 10 a.m. on January 5, as we take a deeper look at this magnificent festival!

Register for UCC's 3rd Annual Couples Retreat



Date: Friday evening, February 7
– Saturday afternoon, February 8

Location: Still Water Lodge
at the Glen Lake Camp & Retreat Center
Glen Rose, TX

Cost: \$215 per couple
*Includes dinner on Friday,
breakfast & lunch on Saturday

It's that time again for couples to come together to reflect, relax and reconnect. The retreat will utilize the LINKS curriculum, designed to help couples improve communication and learn to regularly diagnose and actively strengthen key aspects of their relationship. Rev. Russ Boyd is a certified instructor for LINKS, and will facilitate the retreat. Rev. Boyd has taught the principles at numerous Army-sponsored relationship enrichment retreats for soldiers and spouses. More information on LINKS is available at lovethinks.com.

Mark your calendar and register today for UCC's Third Annual Couples Retreat. A \$100 deposit is due by Friday, December 6. Please contact jessica@uccftw.com for more information.

Finals Feast



Finals Feast is a great celebration of fellowship and food every year for our college students during the first night of finals. Our theme this year will be

"Tacky Christmas Party." As we stream unforgettable Christmas shows, we'll serve classic and over the top Christmas cuisine and wear our tackiest Christmas attire (there will be a prize). Room 207 will be an explosion of holiday cheer on December 9 from 5-7 p.m. All

college students are welcome to attend this event for free in the midst of the madness of finals.

For more information on how you can help with this event please contact jessica@uccftw.com

UCC Mission Statement

University Christian Church is dedicated to proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ through deeply spiritual worship, study, and service.

Founded on the campus of Texas Christian University and shaped by our academic heritage,

University Christian Church encourages a spirit of openness and freedom of thought.

We are called to create a loving and caring community for all people, and work together for justice and peace in our world.

Recognizing that our spiritual journeys are all different, we strive to be respectful and inclusive concerning each individual's relationship with God.

Two Annunciations

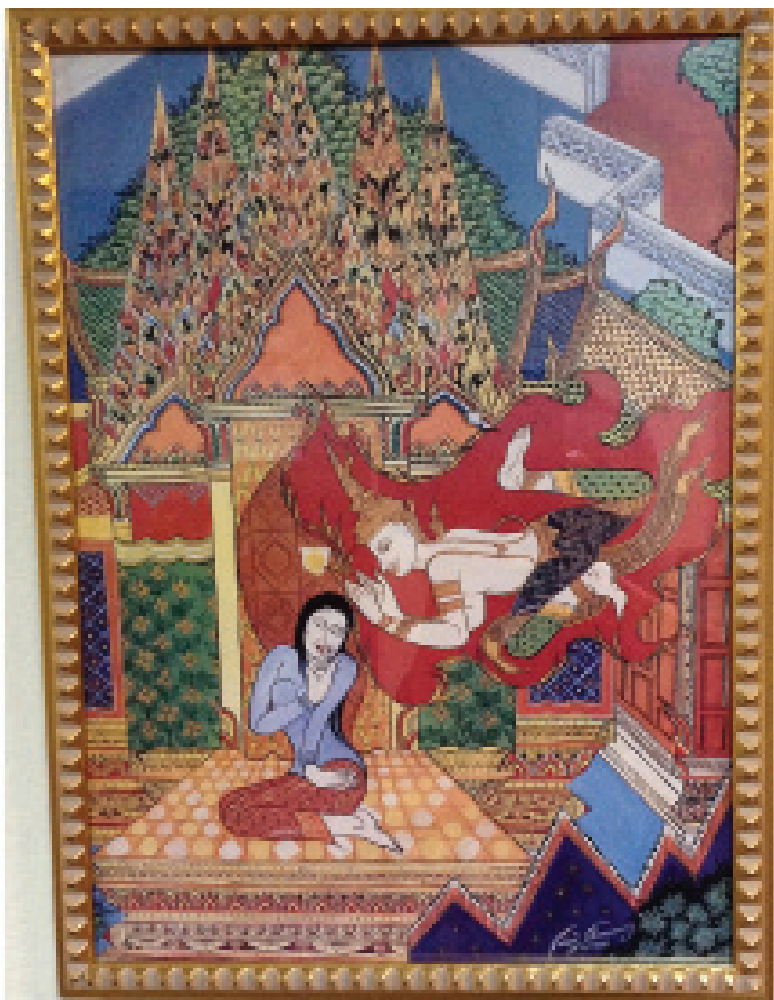
by Shari Gouwens

The annunciation, Gabriel's announcement to Mary that she is to become the mother of Jesus, is found in Luke's Gospel (1:26-39). In the story, Gabriel tells Mary that she has found favor with God and will bear God's Son.

We have two depictions of the annunciation in our Gallery Collection. One is a reproduction of Fra Angelico's *Annunciation* fresco from the San Marco Convent in Florence (where another of our Gallery images, Ghirlandaio's *Last Supper*, is also located). The other *Annunciation* is a reproduction of Southeast Asian artist Sawai Chinnawong's painting. They are placed next to each other in the Gallery during this Advent season. Look for them where you get coffee on Sunday mornings.



The actors in these annunciation dramas are the same in both images. Gabriel brings his announcement to Mary; there are no other witnesses. Both stories are set in an enclosed garden, a symbol for Mary's virginity. In both, Mary appears to respond to the angel's message with humility and acceptance, although one might read some resistance or disbelief in the women's postures.



Fra Angelico places the annunciation in a setting strongly resembling the convent where the fresco is located. All is serene and orderly. In demeanor, Mary and Gabriel are refined and quiet. The composition is balanced, and the space depicted naturalistically in one-point perspective—all characteristic of early Italian Renaissance painting. The colors are muted—except for Gabriel's richly colored wings and Mary's deep blue cloak.

Chinnawong's Mary and Gabriel also are richly clothed, but in brightly patterned materials characteristic of Southeast Asia. Gabriel is active, almost athletic, as he hovers in mid-air making his announcement. The rapidly alternating colors and patterns of the setting energize the image, but we have to work to make sense of what we see. The artist plays with space; Mary and Gabriel are seen "head on," but the garden is tilted in a bird's eye view. The diagonal composition line connecting Mary and Gabriel echoes that tilted space, contributing to the dizziness and disorientation of the experience.

How do you experience God's "interruptions" of your life? Does God arrive in moments of quiet and serenity? Do you recognize God's messages and messengers when they arrive in unfamiliar forms or disorienting circumstances? In this season when we celebrate God's coming into our lives, these images may help us recognize and contemplate that event, even as we consider our response.

Young Adult Mid-Winter Retreat



Young Adult Mid-Winter
January 3-5, Athens, TX
Join young adults (graduated from high school up to 26 years of age) from North East Area, North Texas Area, Trinity Brazos Area (NEA, NTA, TBA) for a weekend of relaxation, Bible study,

discussion, fun, fellowship and worship. This event will be keynoted by Rev. Jessica Vacketta and the registration deadline is December 20. Costs vary from \$50-\$80 and scholarships are available. Contact jessica@uccftw.com with questions or to register.

CCF/JYF in December & JYF Mid-Winter Retreat



CCF/JYF will meet on December 8 and 15 before taking a break for the Christmas holidays. We will have a Christmas Celebration with Movie Night and a Nativity Hunt. Join us for our \$3 snack supper at 6 p.m. and followed by fun, fellowship and programming until 7:30 p.m. We encourage families to experience the Hanging of the Greens Service on December 1 at 6 p.m. and also take part as a family in the Family Caroling Party December 22 at 6:30 p.m.

JYF MidWinter Retreat

Unscripted, January 24-26

JYF MidWinter Retreat at Disciples Crossing in Athens, TX is open for all current third, fourth and fifth graders.

This year we will be exploring scripture. Kids will be exposed to and encouraged to think about scripture and using their Bibles in new and meaningful ways. In addition to simple Bible skills, we will also be exploring scripture through art, music and worship. Of course we will also be exploring the fun and beauty of Disciples Crossing. Please make it a point to experience JYF Mid-Winter Retreat.

Registrations will begin on December 2, scholarships are available. Go to ucckids.org for registration forms or pick one up in The Arches. Any questions, please contact kera@uccftw.com.



Family Caroling Party

Join your UCC family on December 22 at 6:30 p.m. to take the joy and spirit of Christmas into our community through song and fellowship. We will be gathering at the church and then going out in groups to carol to folks in the community surrounding UCC. We will join together after our caroling to share hot cocoa, Christmas goodies and the warm fellowship of Christmas.



Worship at The Search

Join us for worship at *The Search*, Sundays at 5 p.m. through the month of December for this exciting new sermon series!

Want to Schedule a Dedication for Your Child?



Dedications take place during 11 a.m. worship or *The Search*. Upcoming dates are: December 15, January 19 and February 23. The baby dedication is a blessing of the child and a promise from parents to their child to raise them

in a Christian home. But, it is also the public acknowledgement of a covenant with the people of University Christian Church that we as a community of faith will surround the child with the spirit of Christ as they grow in our midst.

In order to affirm these provisions, parents will participate in a Baby Dedication class to learn about some of

the intricacies of a child's faith journey and about how University Christian Church can help foster their family and child in the process of understanding Christ's love.

The next class is February 9 at 10 a.m. Please contact Susan Henry in Children's Ministries, susan@uccftw.com, or ext. 165 for further information.

Important Summer Dates for Children's Ministries



Christmas is not even here, but planning for summer has already begun. Put these exciting summer opportunities for children and families on your calendar!



Vacation Bible School, June 24-June 27
Mark your calendars now so you can be a part of VBS at UCC (ages two to third graders) or Mission VBS (fourth and fifth graders).

Camps for Children and Families
at Disciples Crossing in Summer 2014

Grand Camp I • May 30-June 1
(children ages 4-10 and a grandparent)

Grand Camp II • August 1-3
(children ages 4-10 and a grandparent)

Discovery Camp • May 23-25
(completed second or third grade and a parent)

Family Camp • June 6-8
(families with at least one child under 18 and an adult over 21)

JYF Camp I • June 30-July 4
(completed fourth or fifth grade)

JYF Camp II • July 21-25
(completed fourth or fifth grade)

Children's Sabbath Thank You!



Our focus on children in our community has yielded enough supplies to create 60 Night Night Bags—thank you, UCC!

Our elementary-aged children put the bags together during CCF/JYF and also said a prayer that every child that receives a bag will feel God's love and feel a small bit of comfort.

The Alliance for Children will distribute the bags to children who are away from home and in need of comfort.

Third Grade Bibles



Third graders are invited to save the date for the six week series, *Learning to Use My Bible*. The class begins January 12 at 10 a.m. and concludes on February 16 with the presentation of a Bible as a gift to each child during the 11 a.m. worship service. Make plans now to be a part!



Advent Devotionals for Children and Families

A Bright Star in Bethlehem daily devotions and stickers and Advent calendars have been mailed to all of our children ages two through fifth grade. Extra copies of these resources are available in The Arches. Children's Ministries hopes that these engaging devotions will help your family refocus the craziness of the holidays back to the true meaning of Christmas. Follow the bright star through Advent!

Nurses Notes



Happy Holidays from our Parish Nurses: Phyllis Allen, Teri Brewer, Jane Bruckner, Bette Felder, Chelo Graham, Joanie Grimm, Diane Hawley, Ashley Hodo, Tracie McCrary, Eve Hunter, Carole Widmann and Janice Wilson!

Holiday Health

Please remember to take good care of yourself during this season. Eat sensibly, exercise regularly, get plenty of rest and avoid stress. We know you've heard it all before. That's because it is so important to your general well-being and a joyful holiday season.

Many folks face depression during the holidays. If you know that this can be a depressing time for you, be ready. Continue your daily routine and incorporate some simple things into your life to boost your mood such as calling an old friend, reorganizing a closet or reading a new book.

Some depression-fighting activities:

- Socialize. Force yourself to get out, join a group and seek out positive, optimistic people.
- Exercise. Try to get 20-30 minutes a day of some type of exercise.
- Think positive. Don't be so critical of yourself!
- Do something for someone else.

Healthy Activities for All

Our Dog-Walking group continues Saturday mornings at 9 a.m. We meet at the Fort Worth Zoo employees' parking lot at the corner of University and Colonial.

Sanctuary Walkers meet at 10 a.m. on Wednesdays in the Sanctuary. Walk at your own pace in a quiet setting.

Faithfully Fit Forever continues on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Better Choices, Better Health will be starting a new group in January. We will also include a separate Diabetic class.

Heart-Saver and CPR courses will be available.

Contact Jennifer in the Pastoral Care Office at 817.926.6631 for additional information about these various activities.

Parish Nurse Office Hours

Our office hours will be different over the holidays. We will be open Sundays, December 8 and 15, from 9:30-11:30 a.m., and on Wednesdays, December 4, 11 and 18, from 9 a.m.-noon.



Be a Part of Blessing Our New Tree

Sunday morning, December 8, you are invited to gather for a few moments following the 9 a.m. worship service to bless the new tree now taking root in our Memorial Garden.

More than 74 four years ago, those faithful saints who came before us planted a tree for future generations. To honor the gift to us from those who planted that tree knowing they might never sit in its shade, we have planted another tree in the Memorial Garden; our gift to future generations we may never know.

Last June, when a summer storm felled the magnificent Red Oak that stood in

the upper garden, we knew immediately that we would be planting another tree when the time was right. With the help and advice of our member Jim Estill, the Building & Grounds Committee chose to plant another Red Oak and on October 24 our new tree came "home."

Red Oaks are well suited to this region and do very well in urban spaces like our Memorial Garden. The tree will start putting out roots during the winter since the ground doesn't freeze here as it does in more northern areas, giving our tree a chance to get established over the winter and spring before the severe heat of summer arrives.

9: Postmodern Lessons and Carols

Each year *The Search* explores the traditional readings of Advent in a new way, with images, songs, film and art experiences to take the us deeper into the nativity journey. Join our journey this year on December 8 at 5 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Readings and experiences will span the Old Testament, prophets and Gospels, with multi-sensory prayer encounters for all ages.



Gifts of Hope Program Descriptions

University Christian Church Signature Outreach Ministries. Specific to UCC, these local projects offer help and hope to individuals and families within our community.

The Children's Closet, a ministry of University Christian Church, provides new uniforms, clothing and school supplies to disadvantaged children in Fort Worth.

The Congo Initiative, an 18-month emphasis of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) offers awareness and assistance through projects that increase the amount of available farmland through the Ikengo Agricultural Center, expand the Water Project providing additional wells for potable water and build empowerment of girls through elementary and secondary education opportunities.

Global Ministries, in mission in more than 90 countries and in covenant with more than 160 partner churches and ecumenical bodies around the world, is the joint global mission outreach effort of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ.

The Heifer Project International provides families with income-producing plants and animals and training in their care. HPI educates partners in community building and sustainable agriculture, providing daily nutrition and additional income for basic needs and education of children.

Nicaragua Mission joins in the work of Project Chacocente (Out of the Dump) in Managua as they move families from the city dump to the clean air and fertile soil of rural Masaya, learning skills for living independently and La Mission Cristiana (The Christian Mission Church of Nicaragua), working to offer care and assistance "from the poor to the even more poor."

Rippling Hope helps plan and resource domestic, ecumenical, short-term mission experiences rooted in the vision of a just society by "connecting communities, channeling hope, changing lives!"

Room in the Inn not only provides a safe, clement place for people to sleep during the coldest and hottest nights of the year, it responds to the very human need for community. The Fort Worth faith community offers hospitality, a hot meal and a night's lodging inside the various church facilities on a rotating basis.

Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries provides assistance to hundreds of people in need, especially Central American political refugees, and individuals from other countries in political and economic turmoil. Their ministry is to teach the love of Jesus Christ by building a renewed wholeness and dignity in those who are broken, disenfranchised and displaced.

Tarrant Area Food Bank empowers communities to eliminate hunger by providing food, education and resources through innovation and collaboration.

Gifts of Hope 2013

ORGANIZATIONS/GIFTS	EACH	QTY	TOTAL
University Christian Church Signature Outreach Ministries			
• From Dreams: help provide a prom dress and/or accessories	\$25.00		
• Kid's Hope: a year of teacher appreciation gifts	\$25.00		
• Christmas Angels: gift bag (coat, clothing, shoes, toy, book & Bible)	\$80.00		
The Children's Closet			
• Children's underwear	\$ 6.00		
• A school uniform	\$15.00		
• Two school uniforms (khakis, jeans and two shirts)	\$30.00		
The Congo Initiative			
• Assistance to farmers through the Ikengo Agricultural Center	\$15.00		
• A portion of a well to provide clean water	\$15.00		
• Education for Girls in the Equator Region project	\$15.00		
Global Ministries			
• Nurse training supplies – Christian Hospital of Mungeli, India	\$15.00		
• Children's books – Mission for abandoned children in Ghana	\$15.00		
• Roots in the Ruins: Hope in Trauma materials – Shalom Center, Chile	\$15.00		
Heifer International			
• Share of baby chicks	\$ 4.00		
• Share of a goat providing milk for a family	\$15.00		
• Honey bees and a bee hive	\$30.00		
Nicaragua Mission: Project Chacocente & La Mision Cristiana			
• Supplies for students	\$ 8.00		
• Supplies for bio fuel project	\$15.00		
• Scholarship for a young adult on mission pilgrimage	\$25.00		
Rippling Hope			
• Paint supplies for home renovation projects	\$ 6.00		
• Loppers or a garden rake for yard cleanups in Detroit and El Paso	\$15.00		
• Youth scholarship for Spring Break Mission to El Paso	\$20.00		
Room in the Inn			
• Warm cap and gloves for a homeless guest	\$ 7.00		
• Laundry services at Day Resource Center	\$15.00		
• A warm blanket	\$22.00		
Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries			
• Food for an orphan in Ciudad de Los Niños in Mexico for one day	\$ 4.00		
• Shelter and clothes for a refugee for one night	\$10.00		
• Health kit for a refugee	\$15.00		
Tarrant Area Food Bank			
• 30 meals for seniors living on fixed incomes	\$ 6.00		
• 60 meals for working poor families	\$12.00		
• Food for 4 children in the Backpacks for Kids program	\$24.00		

YOUR NAME _____

PHONE NUMBER () _____

Ottorino Respighi's *Laud to the Nativity*



One of the most prominent Italian composers of the early twentieth century, Ottorino Respighi was known internationally in his day as a composer, performer and educator. During his lifetime his music was heard throughout the Western world, and several of his works have become firmly established in the international repertoire.

Respighi's fame comes primarily from his three orchestral tone poems inspired by different aspects of the city of Rome—The Fountains of Rome, The Pines of

Rome and Roman Festivals. *Laud to the Nativity* is scored for three soloists, mixed chorus and small instrumental ensemble of woodwinds and piano.

Laud to the Nativity is a dramatic elaboration of a short section of the Nativity story as related in the second chapter of Luke. The story centers around the shepherds. The text opens with an Angel announcing the birth of the Christ Child, followed by a chorus of angels who tell of the humble place where the Babe can be found. A shepherd asks for guidance in finding the Child. Upon reaching the manger, the shepherds contemplate the humility of the situation. Mary sings of her joy as the shepherds offer their cloaks in

which to wrap the Baby. After reflecting upon the meaning of the birth, the shepherds ask if they might touch the Child before leaving, and Mary assents. The shepherds burst forth with joyous praises of exaltation. The Angel and Mary join in glorifying the Savior as the work draws to a quiet conclusion.

Please join us in morning worship on December 8 at 9 and 11 a.m. as the Chancel Choir shares the Nativity story through the musical mind of Ottorino Respighi.

Content for this article, historical and biographical information used by permission of Lee G. Barrow, author and Professor of Music at the University of North Georgia.



Give the gift of Emmanuel, God with us, this Advent and Christmas. Invite a friend or family member to join you in worship or one of the many opportunities offered at UCC to enjoy beautiful music, share in fellowship or give life to your faith in service to others.

UCC Quick Financial Summary - Unified Budget October 2013

Description	2012 YTD Actuals	2013 YTD Actuals	Budget YTD 2013	Budget Annual	YTD Variance
Income					
Pledges	\$1,635,158	\$1,709,569	\$1,696,763	\$2,136,134	\$12,805
Non Pledge Contributions	\$189,283	\$150,413	\$190,809	\$300,000	(\$40,396)
Offering	\$26,430	\$28,067	\$27,594	\$36,500	\$473
Misc. Unrestricted Income	\$94,381	\$111,778	\$109,405	\$156,176	\$2,373
WDS Income (Net)	\$79,539	\$89,460	\$88,065	\$94,127	\$1,395
Endowment Income	\$175,838	\$203,954	\$198,553	\$262,162	\$5,401
Participant/Restricted Income & Reserve Use	\$323,564	\$407,130	\$416,672	\$501,738	(\$9,542)
Total Income	\$2,524,193	\$2,700,370	\$2,727,861	\$3,486,838	(\$27,491)
Expenses					
Total Personnel Expense	\$1,495,150	\$1,484,617	\$1,531,661	\$1,814,346	\$47,044
Total Program/Admin. Expense	\$762,332	\$914,011	\$994,724	\$1,162,909	\$80,713
Total Mission/Outreach Expense	\$356,677	\$395,307	\$381,136	\$492,462	(\$14,171)
Total Expenses	\$2,614,159	\$2,793,936	\$2,907,522	\$3,469,717	\$113,586
Net Operating Income (Loss)	(\$89,966)	(\$93,565)	(\$179,660)	\$17,121	\$86,095

*This is a summary report of our Unified Budget. The full report is available for download from the UCC website or copies can be picked up from the Business Office.
NOTE: Donations for 2013 tax purposes must be received or post marked on or before December 31. Regular giving Statements will be sent early December.
End of year Statements for tax purposes will be mailed by January 31, 2014. Contact Michelle Ingram, Director of Accounting, at 817.926.6631 or email michelle@uccftw.com with any questions or comments.*



UCC JOURNAL

University Christian Church
2720 S. University Drive
Fort Worth, TX 76109-1150
817.926.6631

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Congregational Meetings

Communications Committee

Wednesday, December 4
5:30 p.m., Room 202

Building & Grounds

Sunday, December 8
12:15 p.m., Room 202

Finance Committee

Tuesday, December 10
5:30 p.m., Room 203

Board of Stewards

Tuesday, December 17
6:30 p.m., Room 207

All members of the congregation may attend congregational meetings with the exception of any portion of a meeting held in Executive Session.

Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, December 1
6 p.m., Sanctuary

Youth-led • Bell Choirs • Children's Moment



A special evening worship service kicks off the season of Advent by adorning UCC's Sanctuary with greenery and symbolic decorations.

Our youth will provide much of the worship leadership and UCC's youth bell choirs will offer special music, engaging the senses of children, youth and adults alike.

This is a great opportunity to reach out to our community, so be sure to invite friends and neighbors to come be a part of a meaningful UCC tradition.