

SUMMER - JULY 2018

THIS ISSUE INCLUDES:

**INTERVIEW WITH
PASTOR JEFF**

**EMPLOYEE AND MEMBER
SPOTLIGHTS**

HARVEY UPDATE

**SUMMER CALENDAR
AND MORE...**

WESTMINSTER CONNECTIONS

LOVE GOD, MAKE FRIENDS, SERVE OTHERS

WORSHIP WITH US

9:05 - Contemporary

11:05 - Traditional

*Communion is offered the
first Sunday of each month*



A letter from our pastor

Jeff Powers

I am so pleased to introduce our new church-wide publication, Connections. The goal of Connections is to help us know each other better as a church family. This is more than just events and calendars. Connections is about people – the people of Westminster United Methodist Church. The more we are connected to each other, the stronger our community becomes.

Westminster is filled with fascinating and wonderful people. The profiles of members and staff will help you get to know more about the people you may see every week. You will be surprised to learn about people's passions, interests, and history.

I am especially grateful to Jackie McDonald (Communications Specialist) and Donna Yost (Operations). The idea for Connections began with them. They are part of the wonderful church staff that Westminster has put together.

Enjoy this first issue! There will be more to come. And if you have ideas for a member profile or an article, please let us know. Connections is for everyone!

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Jeff Powers



Did you know...

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Priscilla Aguilar



Priscilla Aguilar is our Director of Children's Ministry. She and her husband, Mitchell VerVoot have 2 children, Aden and Shane. We asked her a few questions to help us get to know her better.

Here is what she said:

What do I like best about my job?

That it's not a job at all. I love that I can work with kids and that I get to be myself and silly with them. I love that they take me for who I am. I don't feel the pressure of having to know exactly what I am doing, because they are the best at forgiving and overlooking my flaws.

What was the best vacation you ever had?

Disney World! It is truly magical and I was able to feel like a kid again. These opportunities were hard to come by growing up, so it was a treat.

What is your favorite season? Why?

My favorite season is Winter. I like to dress up in jackets, sweaters, and boots. Growing up in the Caribbean, we don't get cold weather.


What words of wisdom do you try to live by?

I loved seeing a banner with the words "Growing God's Kingdom one child at a time." I feel I am doing this with my everyday life, and I feel fortunate doing so.

"God is calling this congregation to be a haven for all of our neighbors who have spiritual and physical needs." ~Elaine Reynolds

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

John and Elaine Reynolds



Elaine and John Reynolds have been members at WUMC for six years. Elaine has served on the chair of the Trustees, as a member of the choir, and a member of the Weekday School Advisory board. She and John joined Westminster after searching for a church home and finding everyone so welcoming. She says "Westminster is family that we worship with, study with, laugh with and grow in God with." They enjoy traveling, Astros Baseball and spending time with family.

We asked Elaine when she felt especially proud of a member of our congregation or saw Christ working in them and she stated "...when Kristen Kelly stepped down as Director of Children's ministry. Kristen had done a fantastic job with that program and growing it. But she felt God calling her to do something different. I was so moved that she was giving up something comfortable to follow another calling of God."

For Elaine, being a part of this congregation has helped her to step out of her comfort zone - specifically speaking in front of people when she knew her emotions would take over as well as singing in the choir. She feels she has grown so much in her faith in the last six years because of Westminster.

She believes it's Pastor Jeff's Sunday sermons that challenge her to think and Pastor Suzi's passion that has enriched their worship lives. She went on to say that "Kaisi and her staff are amazing with their energy and creativeness, and of course we would be lost without Donna who keeps our church functioning."





HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW PASTOR JEFF POWERS?

Who is your family? Wife, Julie Powers, Christy Steiger, 27, Abilene, TX, married to Garrett, a USAF pilot training to fly B-1 Bombers who will be stationed in South Dakota beginning in 2019. John Clayton, 25, lives with Julie and me due to health issues. Emma, our Jack Russell Terrier, 7

Where did you go to school and what did you major in? University of Houston, Speech Communication and Journalism
Texas Christian University, Brite Divinity School, Masters of Divinity

Who was your childhood hero and why? QB Ken Stabler of the Oakland Raiders. We lived near Oakland during my early childhood and followed the team religiously.

What do you like to do in your free time? I like to read. Have always been interested in business and investing, so do some trading as well.

What are some of your previous assignments?
Pittsburg UMC, Student Pastor, Associate 1996-1998
Cedar Bayou UMC, Associate Pastor 1998-2003
Lake Jackson 1st UMC, Senior Associate Pastor 2003-2004
Teague First UMC, Pastor 2004-2010
Westminster UMC, Pastor, 2010 to present

If you could go anywhere in the world on vacation, where would you go? Some kind of cruise in the Mediterranean with extended days in Greece and Turkey.

What book do you think everyone on the team should read? I have two that did a lot to shape my thinking:
The Tough Minded Optimist by Norman Vincent Peale
Man's Search for Meaning by Victor Frankl.

What is your favorite memory of Westminster to date? There are a lot of good memories, so selecting a favorite memory is challenging. One that stands out is a conversation that I had with long-time member Gilbert Brown. Gilbert had been a member of Westminster for thirty years when I was appointed. He was 91 years old. Gilbert was passionate about the church and indignant that more people were not attending. Everyone who visited the church met Gilbert. He made it his personal charge to lead people to join the church.

About a month into my appointment Gilbert visited with me in my office. He spoke prophetically that morning. He was confident that the church would experience a turnaround during my tenure and offered me his full support and confidence. He was my encourager. I still think about Gilbert and hope that he is pleased with the progress our church has made. He passed away in 2011. I miss him a lot.





SUMMER CALENDAR



JULY

- 7 Mystery trip (rising 3rd-7th grade)
- 8th-13th "Adventures in Missions" Harvey youth
- 11 Bubbles and Bagels (1m-2nd grade)
- 21 Swim Party for rising 1st-5th grade at the Mailhes'
- 27-29 VBS

AUGUST

- 5 Children's Water Party on the front lawn during Sunday School
 - 19 Back to church and Backpack Sunday
 - 26 Fall Sunday School and small group kick off
- Movie Night - TBD



SEPTEMBER

- 4 Men & Women's Tuesday Weekly Study starts
- 5 Wednesday Night studies begin
- 9 Intentional Parenting seminar
- 15 Saturday morning WOW

Men's Cookoff - TBD

INTENTIONAL PARENTING

Purposeful Parenting
Leading Families into God's Intended Design

Sunday from
12:15 pm - 1:30 pm

Speakers: Linda Withers & Stephanie Dickinson

- September 9 - Parenting with Kingdom Values
- October 14 - Raising Kids who make Good Decisions
- November 11 - Thriving in the School Years

Cost is \$20/family
Childcare provided
Please specify if childcare is needed

REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.WUMC.COM

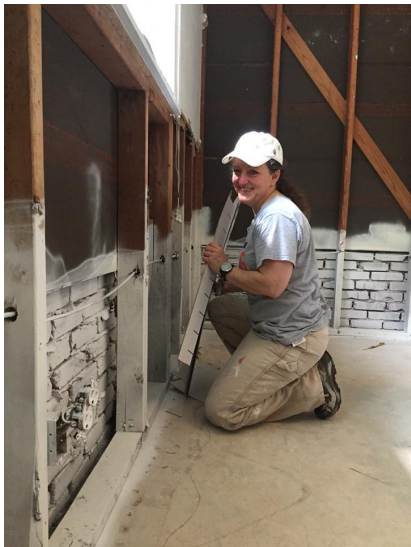



WUMC Harvey Update



It's been almost a year since Harvey's destruction dramatically changed so many lives in Houston, TX. All of the 4.7 million people in Harris County were impacted in some way. With over 60,000 being rescued by the government and tens of thousands others by local civilians. Hurricane Harvey was a category 4 with damages costing over \$125 billion dollars, so far.

The Westminster family teamed up with Restoration Houston to help rebuild Houston. Associate Pastor, Suzi Byrd, and member, Julie Bolton headed up these efforts by working with Restoration Houston to organize work days with homeowners, recruit volunteers, and train workers. Their amazing efforts helped so many and we are so blessed to be a part of such a wonderful community who serves others.



How Has Westminster Helped You?

Want to be featured in our Fall newsletter? Do you have a story you think others need to hear? If this sounds like you or your family would like to be featured in one of our newsletters, we'd love to hear from you.

Contact Jackie at jmcdonald@wumc.com OR Donna at dyost@wumc.com

WUMC Helps Harvey Family



The Hackett Family - Michael, Julie, Gail, Mara, and Gwen.

The Westminster family was able to help one family, in particular, the Hackett's. Michael, Julie, Gail (8), Mara (5), and Gwen (15 mo.) had lived in Meyerland for 5 years prior to Harvey. When asking Julie about their recovery, she said, "Westminster volunteers were in their home the day they could get back in after waters receded, to help them pack things up and find a safe place for their family. It was our first flood and hopefully something we will never have to repeat."

As of January this year they made the decision to demolish their existing home and rebuild an elevated home on their lot. The old home was demolished in May and they broke ground on the new home in June. Their hopes are to be back in their home by early 2019. Julie went on to say, "We have reached a really great place in our recovery, but it wasn't without the help of this incredible place, Westminster - our church home & family."

When asked to describe some details of the events following Harvey, Julie said: "In the immediate aftermath of the storm, our church family at Westminster supported us in so many different ways." Two days after the flood a large group showed up to their home with tools, packing materials, and boxes and began to pack their entire house. When they moved into their new apartment, 2 more groups helped them get settled in. Volunteers took clothes, dishes, and other items, washed them and returned them to their new apartment. The following weeks they had meals delivered and help with moving old and wet furniture to the curb after an insurance adjuster came. They even assisted in building Ikea furniture in the new apartment. Julie joked, "as a side note, if you aren't sure how much a group loves you, you will never doubt it after they build Ikea furniture for you! (Thank you!)"

"We are forever filled with deep gratitude for Westminster's support, and for the way Westminster showed us and all of those around us, such love. We feel like our recovery story is a happy ending that doesn't just belong to us, but to the community who supported us in this journey."





Communication Circle

Let's get connected.



Our church is moving to a new kind of church record keeping solution called Realm®.

It primarily serves the administrative needs of our staff, but it also offers some exciting opportunities to support the way you are involved in our church. Not only will this improve work life for our ministry staff, it will make it easier for our church family to connect with each other, keep up with what's going on, and grow as a connected community of believers. Be on the lookout soon for an invitation to join!



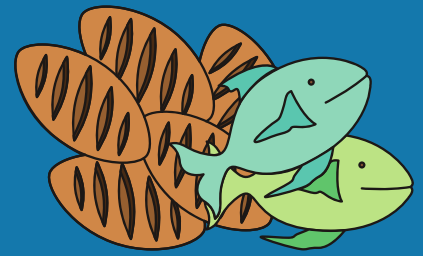
THE BIG CHEESE



Westminster has anMOUSEment! We have a mouse! A communications mouse. Look for me in your weekly communications email, church announcements, and in here, our Connections newsletter. There are a lot of purposeful workings that go on behind the scenes here at Westminster to make worship spiritual and intentional. I am here to help you learn what some of them are. Let's learn about the inner workings of The United Methodist Church together and if you find me hiding around the church check my tag for information on how you can help name me.



COMING THIS FALL!



Sunday School curriculum - Preschool - 5th grade



2-Year program

Here at Westminster, we believe faith formation starts at birth. We have wonderful, loving leaders each week that lead our children on an age-appropriate faith journey through story-telling, prayers, and music. We are so blessed to have such an amazing staff that ensures our little's feel and know the love of God. By using best practices we ensure your little ones take little steps to big faith—starting at birth.

On Sunday mornings, The Bible is brought to life through play, imagination, hands-on learning and easy-to-use content. The children will go through the Bible using these techniques twice in this 2-year curriculum. Gaining the greatest understanding possible, your child will know all about Jesus and his word before entering middle school age.



MAKE FRIENDS...

WHERE TO STUDY THIS FALL

SUNDAY ADULT SMALL GROUPS

SISTERS IN CHRIST - Women in all seasons of life! A DVD driven discussion-based class. (Meets in the Conference Room in the church's office.)

McDANIEL CLASS - Young at heart senior adults. Begins class with singing a hymn followed by a study. One of the first Sunday School class formed at Westminster. (Meets in room A-108.)

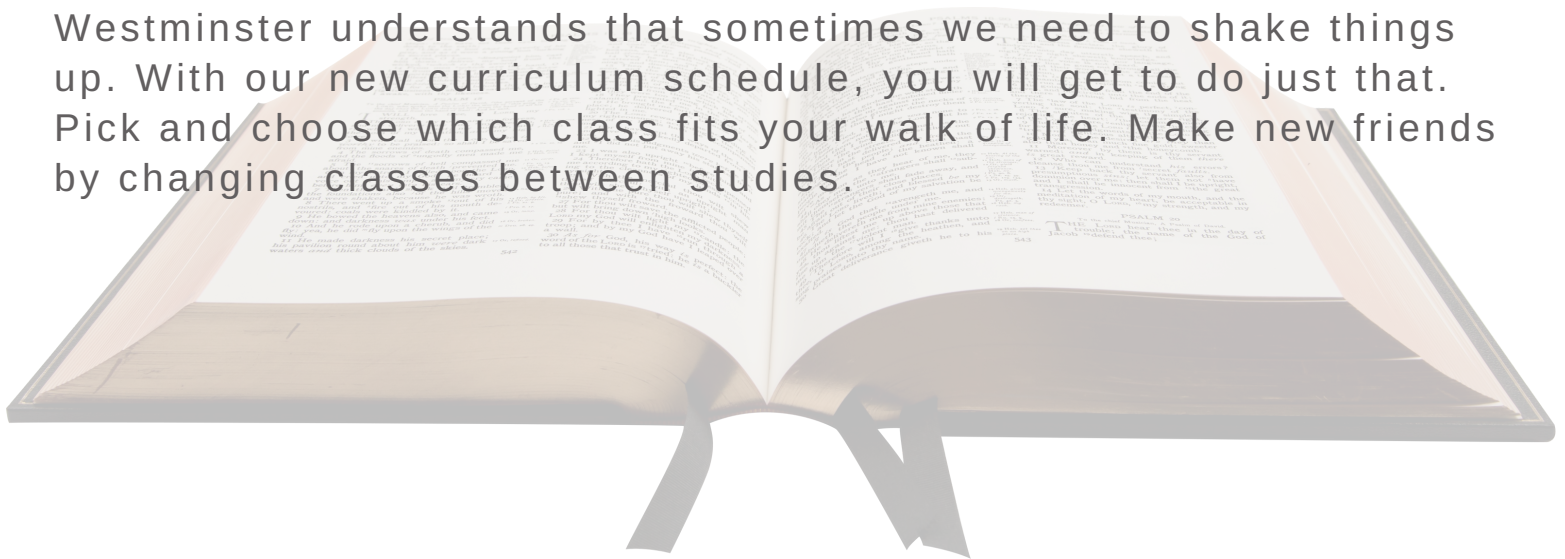
A-109 CLASS

Aug. 26 Animate: Faith God
Sept. 2 Animate: Faith Religion
Sept. 9 Animate: Faith Jesus
Sept. 16 Animate: Faith Salvation
Sept. 23 Animate: Faith Cross
Sept. 30 Animate: Faith Bible

PARLOR CLASS

The Life we Long to Live
The Life we Long to Live
The Life we Long to Live
The Life we Long to Live
The Life we Long to Live
The Life we Long to Live

Westminster understands that sometimes we need to shake things up. With our new curriculum schedule, you will get to do just that. Pick and choose which class fits your walk of life. Make new friends by changing classes between studies.







Westminster Staff

Rev. Jeff Powers, Senior Pastor

Rev. Suzi Byrd, Associate Pastor

Treson Allen, Encounter Worship Leader

Dane Sonnier, Sound Tech.

Susan Terry, Organist

Kaisi Cunningham, Director of Programming

Priscilla Aguilar VerVoort, Director of Children's Ministries (Nursery-2nd Gr)

Millie Eads, Director of Kids Ministries (3rd-5th Gr)

John Blanchette, Director of Youth Ministries (6th-12th Gr)

Jane Vallier, Treasurer

Donna Yost, Director of Operations

Jackie McDonald, Communications Specialist

Ashley Keliehor, Event Coordinator

Anna Hamilton, Wedding Coordinator

Ricardo Saravia, Custodian

Kellie Dietert, WWDS Director

Ruthie Holguin, WWDS Assistant Director

Susan Haggard, WWDS Administrative Assistant

Get Involved

There are many ways to get involved here at Westminster UMC. Small groups, Bible Study, Sunday School, Missions and much more. Talk to an usher or call the office, Monday-Thursday 9 am - 4 pm for more information on how you can serve our church family. We welcome everyone and want to be in fellowship with you.

Join us, you are welcome here!

Prayer Group

"Confess your sin to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective."

~James 5:16

The prayer room is open weekdays during church hours and on Sunday mornings. The Prayer Garden is open 24/7. Prayer requests may be made by filling out a request card, calling the office, or on-line.

NEW HERE?

We are so glad you are here! If you are new to Westminster please see an usher for a free gift.

LOVE GOD, MAKE FRIENDS, SERVE OTHERS

At Westminster, we profess the historic Christian faith in God, incarnate in Jesus Christ for our salvation and ever at work in human history in the Holy Spirit. Living in a covenant of grace under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we participate in the first fruits of God's coming reign and pray in hope for its full realization on earth as in heaven.



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OFFICE HOURS Mon - Thurs
9 am - 4 pm

REACH US: p. (713) 782-7750
f. (713) 977-0340



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