

THE VISITOR

The Congregational Church of Austin United Church of Christ

408 West Twenty-third Street, Austin, Texas 78705-5214

(512) 472-2370

E-mail: ucausti@swbell.net

Web site: congregationalchurchofaustin.org



United Church of Christ Statement of Faith

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus our brother, and to whose deeds we testify:

God calls the worlds into being, creates humankind in the divine image, and sets before us the ways of life and death.

God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, God has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.

God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the service of the whole human family, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

God promises to all who trust in the gospel forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God.

Amen.

May Visitor Deadline April 23, 2021

Church Leadership

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Deacons Chair | Jen Howicz |
| Outreach Team | open |
| Moderator | Joy Penticuff |
| Treasurer | Gail Christeson |
| Financial Secretary | Jaime Hadley |
| Christian Education Coordinators | open |
| Youth Sunday School | open |
| Clerk | Reuel Nash |
| Historians | Pat & Mel Oakes |
| Webmaster | Mel Oakes |
| Member-At-Large | Bill Beardall |

Heart of Texas Association News

April

by Liz Nash

We invite all of you to attend our spring Heart of Texas Association meeting, to be held on Saturday, April 24th beginning at 10 am on Zoom. Worship, which begins the meeting, will be led by clergy from our South Texas cluster. One major part of our business will be to help people understand our possible participation in a Unified Fitness Review Committee at the Conference level, which would transfer most of this extremely time-consuming work from our Association Committee on Ministry to the proposed Conference committee -- if we decide to go in this direction. We already offered some explanation of this possibility earlier, but our aim at this meeting would be to help those who attend to understand the change more fully (as the process to make this change is fairly complex) and possibly vote to participate. We also anticipate having up to three Ecclesiastical Councils. One, which has already been announced, will be to grant **Rev. Amelia Fulbright**, who is currently a Baptist minister, Privilege of Call in the United Church of Christ, meaning that, if approved, she would be able to search for a ministry call in the UCC and gain full ministerial standing with us. Our Committee on Ministry will be meeting in April with two other candidates. If these candidates are approved, we will be announcing their Ecclesiastical Councils in advance of our Association Meeting. We also will be sending out the papers the ministry candidates have written to our churches to allow reading before the Meeting. It will be important to have a quorum of attendees from a majority of our churches to allow voting on our candidates. We hope to finish midday and encourage you to join us.

I share with you, too, the sad news for those who do not know that **Douglas Anders**, our former Conference Minister, died on Monday, March 22nd at his home in Bel-Nor (in St. Louis), Missouri. He fought a courageous battle with cancer for several years, always expressing in his email updates his faith in God no matter what the outcome. For me, **Douglas** was a trusted and valued colleague and friend. I had a close understanding of how hard he worked, of how engaged he was in the stewardship of our Conference's resources, of his dedicated work with leadership and committees, and of his care for

the South Central Conference and all of our churches. Many people experienced his kindness and also his engagement and help when a church or a minister was in need. After he retired and moved home to St. Louis, he gave his time and gifts, even over the years of his illness, in many, many ways: as an Interim Conference Minister, as an interim and supply minister in churches, as a volunteer doing substantial work for the Missouri Mid-South Conference, and as an elected Alderperson for the City of Bel-Nor. As a measure of who he was, the city of Bel-Nor posted this on its website: "We lost a good friend, neighbor, and colleague with **Douglas's** death. He was a consummate gentleman who fought a courageous battle with illness but worked hard for the city and other causes as long as he was able. He will be sorely missed." **Douglas** will be missed indeed. Let us commend him to God and give thanks for his life with us, with those he served, and now for his life surrounded by God's love without measure.

Blessings in Christ,
Liz Nash, Association Minister

Personals
by Pat Oakes

It is hard to believe that **Lynne** and **George Lemley** are new grandparents, but it is true. **Josette Kathryn Lemley** was born to **Jeffrey** and **Rachelle Lemley** on March 16th. She weighed in at six pounds and nine ounces—**Lynne** noting that that was two pounds less than **Jeffrey** when he was born. **Jeffrey** is completely taken with his new daughter and fortunately has a month of daddy-leave from **Mark Hart Architecture** to get used to the idea of not holding her all the time. **Rachelle** is an artist and working from home, so she can start back to work when **Josette** is a bit older. **Lynne** is stopping by about every other evening on her way home from work to check in and see how things are going. **Lynne** works in SE Austin, **Jeffrey** and **Rachelle** are in close in South Austin, and **Lynne** and **George** are in Round Rock—just 1 1/2 blocks from **Nodie** and **Dennis**, so it works well to have a visit before heading back to Round Rock.



3/19/21 Aunt Katie Lemley with newly-minted niece Josette



3/16/21 Newborn Josette Kathryn Lemley with her parents Jeffrey and Rachelle Lemley



3/25/21 Delighted Jeffrey Lemley with his daughter Josette

Personals (cont)
by Pat Oakes



3/25/21 Enchanted grandmother Lynne Lemley with her 8-day old granddaughter Josette



4/7/1956 Newlyweds Joan and Bill Mueller on their wedding day in Alameda, CA.

In honor of Rev. **Tom VandeStadt's** exceptional service to the Congregational Church of Austin, the Deacons voted (and the Trustees approved) to donate \$1000 in **Tom's** name to the Equal Justice Center – the charity of his choice. The Deacons ask that the members and friends of the church also contribute to the Equal Justice Center in **Tom's** name. There are several ways to do this: (1) using the tithe.ly app, and designating the Equal Justice Center, (2) send a check to the church with “Equal Justice Center” in the memo or (3) donate directly to the Equal Justice Center at <https://www.equaljusticecenter.org/>.

Bill and Joan Mueller are celebrating 65 years of marriage on April 7th. They were married at the First Presbyterian Church in Alameda, California, and then went to Los Angeles where **Bill** began his first job at Hughes Aircraft. He had just finished graduate school at UC Berkeley. They have had a long fulfilling life with three children and two grandchildren. Their oldest grandchild **Luke Mueller-Oden**, a Texan, will graduate from George Washington University this spring with a degree in economics. He is interested in politics at some point, but right now is looking for a job. Their second grandchild is now 17 months old, a delightful little girl named **Charlotte** who lives in southern California. They see her often via FaceTime and look forward to holding her and laughing with her soon!!

Zooney Parkhill celebrated her 9th birthday in great style on March 15. She and her family went to Peter Pan Miniature Golf on Barton Springs Road. She has been to several Equal Justice Center golf tournaments there, so she knew it would be lots of fun. We haven't seen the **Parkhill/Kohrt** contingent in person for more than a year and we know that **Caleb** is really growing fast, but that is not a beard in the photos—it is his black mask!!



3/15/21 Birthday girl Zooney Parkhill celebrated big time at Peter Pan Golf with her grandmother Debby Kohrt and her brother Caleb Parkhill

Personals (cont)

by Pat Oakes



3/15/21 Peter Pan Golf celebration for Zooney Parkhill's 9th birthday with Caleb, Kristin, and Jason Parkhill

We've got a number of folks who are dealing with health issues—all different kinds—and they certainly would enjoy hearing from church members. **Sarah Darter** had a hip replacement on Monday, March 15th, and things went well. She went to her grandson **Parker's** 12th birthday celebration on the following Sunday and that set her back a few days as the doctor didn't make it clear to **Sarah** that she wasn't supposed to leave her house for two full weeks. Send her a note at sdarter500@gmail.com. **Bob Garrett** had a bad fall in mid-February and suffered a badly broken leg which required surgery and a number of pins to put it all back together again. He is now at home and **Jo** is taking good care of him. He will be really glad when he is able to put weight on the affected leg. **Jo** will share what you send if you write her at pedichaplain@gmail.com or write to **Bob** at 7307 Brookhollow Drive, Austin, Texas 78752. **Nodie Murphy** is having a difficult time with ulcerative colitis and has been hospitalized in Round Rock Baylor Scott and White for days in February (during the big freeze) and again in March for several weeks. She is weak and has lost weight. **Dennis** has been spending the daytime hours with her and then coming home and taking care of things there. **Nodie** was transferred to a skilled nursing center on the 23rd of March at Cedar Pointe in Cedar Park. Unfortunately,

there is a 14 day quarantine for any new clients, so they are communicating by phone instead of in-person. Both of them are doubly vaccinated and have been tested for COVID-19, but that is state law. She does not have her phone with her, but you can send messages to her via Dennis's e-mail (dorfnarr@gmail.com) or to their home at 1908 Creekview Drive, Round Rock, Texas 78681. **Dennis** is going out there every day to deliver mail, or the newspaper—and hopes he can figure out what window is hers so he can wave.

One piece of good health news comes from **Chester Rosson** who had his first pacemaker installed about a month ago. **Chester** admits to have been quite apprehensive about the procedure, but now says that he is doing very well and is so glad that he had it done.

We were all saddened in early January when we learned that **Beth Placek's** husband **Chencho Flores** had died of COVID-19 at the age of 91. Friends of his family thought that the wider world should know of his music and his loss, so they contacted the PBS Newshour which has, for much of the past year, paid tribute to the lives lost by featuring five folk each Friday evening at the end of the news hour. **Chencho**, one of the five honored on Friday, March 19, was a remarkable, self-taught accordionist playing in the conjunto style. In case you never got to hear him play (he played at several talent show at church), click on the following link. **Chencho** appears about two minutes into the tributes. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/remembering-5-amazing-lives-lost-to-covid-19>.

Lucy Erda will celebrate her 60th birthday on April 10th. People are encouraged to send her a bunch of cards so she can have a card shower. Her mailing address is 5001 Convict Hill Rd., #901, Austin, TX 78749. She is also celebrating that she has lost over 100 pounds in a full year. She is feeling so much better and is so pleased that she made this phenomenal goal. She is back walking for pleasure and enjoying it so much—except when she fell recently—stumbling on a bad patch of sidewalk -- in mid-March and bruising her leg and suffering some scratches, but she is much better now. Happy Birthday, **Lucy!!!**

Becca Rosson, daughter of **Robin Rosson** and

Personals (cont)

by Pat Oakes

his wife **Julia Ross**, and granddaughter of **Barbara Burnham** and **Chester Rosson**, missed her fourth birthday party and celebration last year because it was right at the beginning of the quarantine. She turned five on the 15th of March and had celebrations all week--lots of sweet treats and a private tour of Berkeley Farm where they all got to meet baby pigs and goats, including a pair of two-hours-old newborn goats. That is very special!



3/15/21 Enthusiastic Becca Rosson celebrating her 5th birthday with special treats



3/21 Nature lover Becca Rosson holding a baby goat on her birthday tour of Berkeley Farms

Jim, Jen, and Tess Howicz report that **Tess** was accepted to two top five journalism programs: University of Missouri and University of Texas. They visited Mizzou in Columbia, Missouri, over her spring break, and she is hooked. **Jim** and **Jen** joked that they were going to have to re-engage the child door locks on the car to bring her back home. While she loves UT, she understandably wants a college experience away from home. They also got to visit **Jen's** mom on the trip. She had been very ill back in February. They originally thought it was some reaction to her 2nd COVID vaccine which she had the day before she was admitted to the ICU. She's doing better and has been discharged from the hospital but needs heart surgery to replace a stenotic valve that is causing the fluid backup in her lungs. She is scheduled for pre-op testing over the next couple of weeks, so they are praying that she stays well until then. She has been fully vaccinated, so the three of them were able to take shifts visiting with her at the nursing home, sitting socially distanced in a large room. While **Jen** is grateful for that opportunity, not being able to hug her was excruciating. **Jen** is so looking forward to being fully vaccinated so she can be with her - complete with hugs - when she goes in for surgery.



3/16/21 Tess Howicz has chosen Mizzou as her college pick!

Personals (cont)

by Pat Oakes

Our stellar cellist **Tony Rogers** shared a worship gift with us on Palm Sunday—a beautiful arrangement of “Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley.” **Tony** also did a recent interview with KUT in which he talks about his wonderful experiences with his Covid Cello Project. Here is the link for that <https://www.kut.org/life-arts/2021-03-15/why-dont-i-just-invite-the-world-austin-based-covid-cello-project-brings-together-musicians-from-around-the-globe>. You can listen to his worship gift on the March 28th Palm Sunday service on YouTube—<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEI7fDxIaM59I6fpPIORqg>.



3/28/21. Tony Rogers playing his beautiful worship gift on Palm Sunday

It was so good to hear from **Eunice Paul** recently, writing from Leatherhead, Surrey, England. She and her late husband **Bob Paul** were members of the church during the 1980s and up to 1990 when **Bob** was on the faculty at The Austin Presbyterian Seminary. Their son **Martin** is still in Connecticut and she has a brief call with him every day, but her connection to Austin nowadays is through the Visitor. She enjoys finding familiar names and faces in the newsletter and says some of us haven't changed but others she would have a hard time recognizing. She is still living alone in her apartment and her daughter **Lydia** is about 10 miles away. **Lydia** is her sole contact with the outside world as they have been in lockdown for so long and **Lydia** keeps her mom supplied with the necessities of life. She is used to being alone so it doesn't bother her much, but everyday life is not very interesting! She shops for groceries on-line and has everything delivered - her only outings for months have been to the dentist and the doctor for blood tests. Being

almost 100 years old (September 28th is the big day) means that she wonders, every morning, which part of her won't work well that day! She shares the day, almost, (but not the year,) with **Rambie Briggs**. She also remembers how unusual it seemed when **John McNeeley** celebrated his 100th with a wonderful celebration at church, almost fifty years ago. When she read about our incredible frigid weather, she thought of the December 1989 cold spell in Austin when there were more than twenty breaks in the pipes underneath their house and the amazing plumbers were featured in the Austin American Statesman. She remembers golfer **Tom Kite**, who lived next door to them, holding the end of a hose to a faucet outside his house, feeding the other end into their bathroom so that they could fill the tub with water, to flush the toilet. The joints didn't fit but his wrists were so strong he could just hold the hose in place long enough to fill the bath. Her last visit to Austin was in April of 2001 for the 100th birthday celebration of the church. She finds it hard to believe that our most

Personals (cont)
by Pat Oakes

recent minister, whom she didn't meet (**Tom** arrived in August of that year), has already left, but she still feels so much a part of our church. She remembers the summer their two little grandchildren were with them, sitting behind **Nancy Brown** in church, helping to choose the altar embroidery for the chancel, being greeted by church folks as they crossed the street on their first visit to the church and so many other occasions and people. **Eunice** sends her love to all who remember her and **Lydia** sends her best, too.



Summer of 1987—just a few years ago! Dinner party at the Oakeses-- Pat and Mel Oakes, Eunice and Bob Paul, Fran Briggs, Dennis and Nodie Murphy, and Rambie Briggs

History Corner by Pat & Mel Oakes



Easter bunny Easter eggs made with onion skins (left) and bluebonnets (right)—the late Hildegard Everett, a dear friend in the church, taught me how to make these eggs as the early German settlers did in Fredericksburg--using bluebonnets and the papery part of onion skins. Give me a call if you want to know how.

Celebrating Easter through the years.



4/17/1936 The newly renovated chancel was ready for Easter Sunday, April 17th, 1938 with Rev. S. Marcus Houge as minister. His wife Marguerite was at the piano and the junior choir was ready to sing .

History Corner by Pat & Mel Oakes, cont.



4/23/2000 Easter Sunday--see the church history site for
IDs--<https://www.patandmeloakes.com/PatandMelOakesFamilySite/CCAHistory/CCAGroup2000.html>



4/15/01 Glorious Melanie Wilkinson singing at the Easter sunrise service at Mt. Bonnell, 2001--Rev. Rich Thompson, Melanie, Nodie, Julia Ross, Dennis

History Corner by Pat & Mel Oakes, cont.



4/8/07 After the Easter egg hunt--Katie Lemley, Emily and Tess Howicz, Savanna and Harrison Tucker, Lilly and Jacob Alvarado



4/4/10 The flowering of the cross on Easter Sunday

History Corner by Pat & Mel Oakes, cont.



4/4/10 Delicious traditional Easter brunch after the church service



4/1/12 The Easter orchestra--Sara Ross, Barbara Burnham, Megan Goff w/bass.
Dave Ross, Katie Lemley, and Rambie Briggs

History Corner by Pat & Mel Oakes, cont.



4/5/15 Easter Sunday brunch at church after the service



3/27/16 Easter Sunday and the flowered cross—a tradition brought to us by Marilyn Vaché

History Corner by Pat & Mel Oakes, cont.



4/16/17 Choir member Cathy Hubbs wreathed with Easter lilies on Easter Sunday



4/21/19 The choir singing the Easter anthem in front of the beautiful flowered cross 2 years ago—the last Easter service we had in the sanctuary. We can't wait until next Easter!