

# THE VISITOR

**The Congregational Church of Austin    United Church of Christ**

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

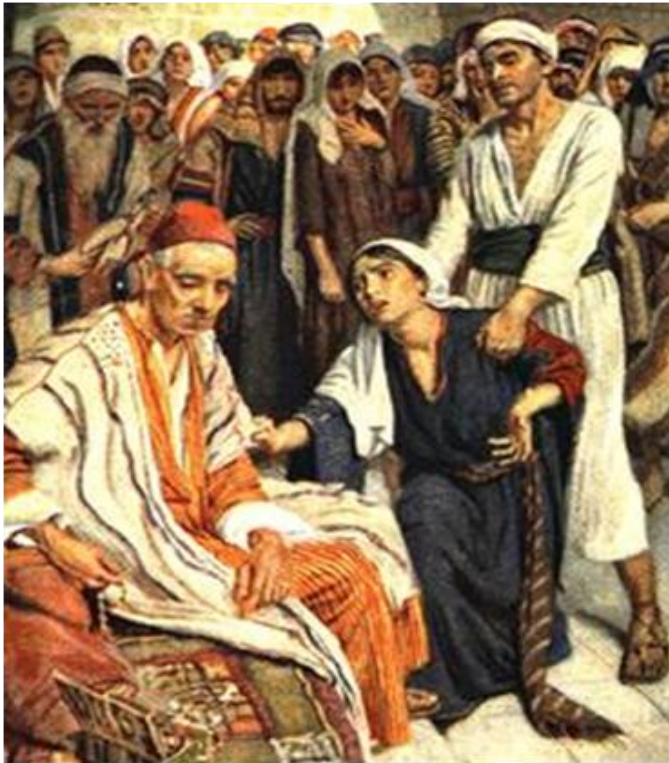
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**Rev. Thomas J. VandeStadt**

**Rev. John Towery, Pastor Emeritus**

In Luke's Gospel, we read Jesus' parable of the widow and the unjust judge. The unjust judge can represent anything in this world that's hard-hearted, cold-hearted, or heartless, that's callous, pitiless, or merciless, that's uncaring, unrighteous, or unjust.



The widow, on the other hand, can represent any person who's ignored, oppressed, or exploited by the hard-hearted, cold-hearted, heartless, callous, pitiless, merciless, uncaring, unrighteous, or unjust, but who refuses to be ignored or victimized without putting up a fuss.

Jesus said, pray like the widow. Pray with persistence. In the face of forces that diminish life and perpetuate injustice, pray with the same undying determination and gumption that this widow brings to her case before the unjust judge. Don't lose heart.

Why does Jesus say we must pray with such persistence and determination? Is it because God is so indifferent that it takes a superhuman effort, a mega-dose of nagging, to elicit a response from God? No. This isn't what Jesus is saying. In this parable, the unjust judge is not a stand-in for God. Jesus concludes the parable by saying, "will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will God delay long in helping them? I tell you, God will quickly grant justice to them."

But wait, if God's justice is so swift, why do we need to persist with such determination? Why do we need to persevere day and night, over and over again, in our prayer for justice?

When I read this parable, I feel a tension between the need to persevere and the swiftness of God's justice. Perhaps it was a tension felt by Jesus and his disciples, and by Luke and his church. They lived under the reign of the unjust judge, and they longed for that day when God would remove the unjust judge from office, knock the mighty from their thrones, and give good things to the poor, the hungry, the sick, and the outcast. They longed for that day when God's messiah would come to reign over God's kingdom. When that day comes, they believed, God's justice will be swift. God will act on behalf of the widow without delay. When that day comes.

*When* will that day come? Jesus wouldn't say. You know neither the day nor the hour. But I tell you this: be alert, be ready, keep the faith, pray with persistence, and don't lose heart. Be like the widow before the unjust judge.

*When* will that day come? What if that day is *today*? What if Christ is always already seeking to return *right now*?

What if our persistent spiritual practice is not to hold out for Christ's return with great fanfare at some unspecified time in the future, but to persist day and night in making ourselves humbly available for Christ's return right now, in this time and place, in our own bodies, so that we, with Christ's Spirit at work within us, can continue to persist with the unjust judge?

What if the swiftness of God's justice is related to the persistence of our own spiritual practice? What if we "don't lost heart" by actually losing our hearts in persistent self-surrender to the transformative love that Jesus Christ embodied? What if embodying this love is the only hope for just and sustainable human life in this world? Then we better get practicing. Persistently. Now.

TOM

### Art From The Streets by Joan Mueller

**ART FROM THE STREETS**, the program for homeless artists is one of our outreach efforts. We have another exhibition of their vibrant art hanging in the Fellowship Hall. All are for sale. See the price list and a sign up sheet on the sideboard. Be sure to include your email or phone number on the list. Place a flower sticker on the one you choose. I will remind you when you can take your new art home.. . . . .

**THE BIG ANNUAL SALE is November 9th and 10th**, from 12-5, at the Austin Convention Center. Come to support the artists who will be there with their work. It is a huge, happy event. A great variety of kinds of art and all very affordable.

ENJOY! Joan Mueller. [joanmueller36@gmail.com](mailto:joanmueller36@gmail.com)

### Interfaith Thanksgiving Service and Celebration

Date: Nov. 24, 2013 Time: 3 - 4:30pm  
St. Louis Catholic Church - 7601 Burnet Rd. - Free parking available at the church. Reception follows for those in attendance. Please bring your favorite dish ready to serve. Contact us at (512) 386-9145 or [iact@interfaithtexas.org](mailto:iact@interfaithtexas.org) for more information.

Learn more about the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service and Celebration. <http://interfaithtexas.org/itsc/>

#### Church Leadership

|                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Trustees Chair      | John Goff      |
| Deacons Chair       | Jaime Hadley   |
| Outreach Team       | Marilyn Vaché  |
|                     | Warinda Harris |
| Moderator           | Reuel Nash     |
| Treasurer           | David Ross     |
| Financial Secretary | Steve Domingue |
| Clerk               | Betty Bodman   |
| Historian           | Jaime Hadley   |
| Web mistress        | Sara Ross      |



Greg Futch (l) with Caleb and Jason Parkhill at Peter Pan Golf.

## Personals by Pat Oakes

The Third annual **Equal Justice Center Golf Tournament and Barbecue** at **Peter Pan Golf** on Barton Springs Road took place on Thursday evening, Sept. 26th. More than 200 folks showed up for barbecue and golf and good conversation--and celebrated the 12th anniversary of the founding of the organization. Our church was very well represented. Congregational golfers included director **Bill Beardall**, **Sarah Darter**, **Tom VandeStadt** and **Robin Chapman**, **Greg Futch**, **Jason** and



Bill Beardall, Director of the Equal Justice Center, at Peter Pan Golf during the Center's Third Annual Golf Tournament on Sept. 26th.



The Equal Justice Center golf tournament at Peter Pan Golf (l-r) Dennis Murphy, Ruth Koenig, Mel Oakes, Nodie Murphy, Robin Chapman, Betty Bodman, Pat Oakes, and Tom VandeStadt in front of the hole sponsored by donors from our church.

**Caleb Parkhill** (baby **Zoey** was sick so Kristen stayed home with her), **Betty Bodman**, **Ruth Koenig**, **Kevin**, **Rachel**, **Isabella**, **Francesca**, and **John Dietz**, **Fran** and **Rambie Briggs**, **Paula**, **Michael**, **Giovanni**, and **Stella Fracasso**, **Dave** and **Sara Ross**, **Mel** and **Pat Oakes**, **Nodie** and **Dennis Murphy**, **Barbara Sterling** and **Bob Brander**.

On Sunday, **October 20**, Tom announced that he had talked to **Joe McMillan** who really was feeling much better and was hoping to be in church on the 27th. After worship the congregation honored **Reuel Nash** for his work with the youth group these many years, and celebrated **Bill Mueller's 85th** birthday (during Joys and Concerns, **Joan** said that after 57 years of marriage, Bill was still the delight of her life). The **Nash** family brought the chocolate cake that Reuel loves (from Annie's Kitchen) and Joan brought the carrot cake that Bill loves (from Central Market). Reuel likes his cake with ice cream and milk, and both were served; everyone seemed to enjoy both cakes and all the accoutrements.



Kevin and Rachel Dietz with Isabella, Francesca, and John at the Peter Pan Golf Tournament.



The Sunday School kick-off breakfast hosted by teacher Anna Kimberley was enjoyed by a good group. (l to r) Ellie Nash, Scarlett Quisenberry, Shannon Quisenberry, John, Francesca and Isabella Dietz, Rachel Dietz, teacher Anna Kimberley, Kevin Dietz, and Doyal Pinkard

Continued from page 3

On Saturday, **November 9th**, **Lucy Hanouille** will be joining with thousands of people nationwide this fall to walk in the **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's** (AFSP) Out of the Darkness Community Walk. AFSP helps to fund groups like **Austin Survivors of Suicide**, a support group for those who have lost loved ones to suicide. It is a very healing and supportive group. Lucy owes much of her healing and serenity to their aid. She will be walking in memory of her late partner, Cian Ross. Her fund raising goal this year is \$200. To donate, follow this link: <http://afsp.donordrive.com/>

Your disorganized correspondent forgot to include the **Sunday School Kick-Off** breakfast in last month's column. A good number of kids and grownups were there for an introduction by **Anna Kimberley** of the curriculum for the next year and also to enjoy breakfast tacos and other delicious treats. (see photo on page 3.)

That same Sunday the **Deacons** presented Bibles to three of our upcoming students. Three Deacons presented the Bibles to 'their' student by reading a favorite Bible selection that they have found meaningful in their lives.



Isabella Dietz, Alden Harris, and Stella Fracasso received bibles from the Deacons on August 25, 2013.

**Isabella** is in fifth grade at Gullett Elementary, **Alden** is in fifth grade at Patton Elementary. **Stella** is in fourth grade at Rawson Saunders.

We have been missing **Josh Sabik** recently as he has not been back to Austin much since he moved to **San Marcos** to be nearer to school

at **Southwest Texas State**. He says that he misses us, too, and will would like to come back soon. He has been job searching lately, mostly for part-time work in San Marcos while keeping an eye toward the horizon. He's been riding his bike around town without incident, wearing his helmet (thanks to Tom!), and he has bought a new pair of bike lights.

**Thaisa Howorth**, our child-caregiver for the past year and a half, has a story relating to "the best laid plans of mice and women . . ." A recent UT graduate, she was planning to head to **South Korea** in November to teach English in

**An Yang** near Seoul, but there were paperwork and other delays, so November is no longer an option. She had already turned in her resignation to the church. Korea might not be until February now, and she is applying for jobs in Austin, and even New York, to tide her over. If that happens, she may not be able to afford Korea anymore. Stay in touch, Thaisa. You will be missed!



**Thaisa Howorth**, our child-caregiver for the past year, is leaving to pursue new challenges.

**Betty Appel** celebrated her 90th birthday on Sept. 18th. Earlier that month she climbed a mountain in Colorado with her daughter **Lisa**. Betty was using a cane for some extra help. She didn't make it all the way to the top, but was pleased with how high she got!



Vic and Betty Appel were in church celebrating Betty's 90th birthday

**Suzanne Vanderpoel** is delighted to have another chance to brag about her oldest grandson, **Ty Hemphill**. Ty was recently elected to the **Ross Volunteer Company** at **Texas A&M**, one of the oldest student organizations in Texas. Composed of upperclassmen chosen for their honor, humility and character, the "RVs" are the crack drill team in the Corps of Cadets and serve as the official honor guard for the Governor's Office. She loves their motto: "Soldier, Statesman, and Knightly Gentleman."



Aaron Carter-Cohn and his new bride, Quintina Winnie.

There will be more news next month, but congratulations and best wishes are in order for our former pianist **Aaron Carter-Cohn** who left us in 2008 after deciding to pursue a graduate degree in conducting at **UTSA**. After some time at **Ohio State University**, he received a **Fulbright** to study the music of Nigeria. He has been there for more than a year now and during that time he met **Quintina Winnie**. They were married **October 17** in a traditional Igbo ceremony in **Enugu, Nigeria**.

Long-time members of the church remember the late **Bob Paul** and his widow **Eunice** who were at the church in the 1980s. Eunice lives in **Leatherhead, Surrey, England**. At the end of June her 58-year old son **Martin**, in Connecticut, suffered a massive stroke. He was in the local library at the time and was taken to Norwalk Hospital. They realized it was major and wanted to airlift him to **Westchester Medical Center** in New York State but there was a thunderstorm so the helicopter couldn't take off. He was rushed there by ambulance, with his ex-wife following in her car, and had emergency brain surgery. His sister Lydia and Eunice didn't know about it until Lydia got a call from her brother Tim, in Pittsburgh, as he had to give consent for the surgery. Martin is fine mentally, which is wonderful, but needs a lot of therapy on his left side. He is now in rehab in **Southport, Connecticut**, and is making slow but steady progress. He can now get himself from bed to wheel-chair (when he first went there they had to use a machine to get him out of bed) and can walk increasing distances with a walker. Recently he tied his shoelaces! Eunice talks to him every evening to hear about progress and, of course, some days are better than others. **Lydia** went over for a week in August so that they could get some reassurance and was very impressed with

his attitude and the hard work he is doing. Tim visited from Pittsburgh about a month ago and sorted out some practical things. Martin has lots of friends locally and a great support network. He gets visitors and phone calls every day and is determined to get out of there! At the age of 92, Eunice had given up any idea of another trip to America as the travelling is too much of a hassle. Tim's older son, **Ian**, is to be married in **New Jersey** on November 16th but Eunice had said there was no way she would be able to attend. However, all members of the family have convinced her to change her mind as Martin is determined to be there. Eunice certainly would not go alone so Lydia, Dean (her son-in-law who did a pastoral exchange with John Towery years ago) and Eunice are booked to fly to **Newark** on November 14th and stay in a hotel in New Jersey until Monday, the 18th. **Sali** (Martin's ex-wife) plans to bring Martin down for the weekend and their son, Oliver, who is a senior at **Wooster** in Ohio will be there, too. With luck Eunice will see all her "American" family. Eunice sends greetings to everyone - she does so enjoy **The Visitor** - especially the pictures. She says that some of us look exactly the same--and others she would not recognize. She did not name names!!

**Mel and Pat Oakes** had a very busy October. Pat's cousin **Linda Ronan** came from NYC to Austin for a five-day visit and especially enjoyed catching up with Pat's aunt--and Linda's great-aunt **Doris** who at 91 is still sharp as a tack. They also did some research at the **Ransom Center** on **Lewis Carroll**. Linda is a graduate of the Boston Girls' Latin School and Carroll had some correspondence with 4 9th grade girls who started a literary magazine called (with his permission) *The Jabberwock* in 1888. She was disappointed not to visit the **LBJ Library** which was closed. The day she left, Mel and Pat drove to **Ft. Worth** and Dallas for a 5 day trip to visit friends and family. While in Dallas there were 13 Oakeses having a great time together. A highlight was going to the State Fair of Texas--a first for Pat--Mel was there when he was a baby in **1936** for the **Texas Centennial Fair**. Pat and Mel got home on Monday and the following Thursday headed out to a high school reunion for Mel in **Vicksburg**.

On their way out of town, with the help of **Mary Towery Masters**, they had a lovely visit with **John and Eleanor Towery** at the Cottages of Chandler Creek in Round Rock. **John and Mel** talked tennis (the tennis group they started more than 35 years ago is still on-going) and Pat, Mary, and Eleanor talked about family. **Sally Towery Johnson** is doing better after her spinal surgery for an infection and is home after several weeks in rehab. She still has to use a walker and has a lot of work ahead of her, but things are definitely getting better. **Betty Gentry**, Eleanor's sister had been for a long visit, staying with her

**Brazos Association News**  
**October**  
**by Liz Nash**

**O**ur **Brazos Association Fall Meeting** is coming up on **Saturday, November 9th, from 10 am through lunch (with registration at 9:30 am), at the Congregational Church of Austin.** All of our Association church members are invited and encouraged to come. Congregational Church is serving fajita lunch for \$7 and would appreciate RSVPs to the church office by November 5th at 512-472-2370 or [ucausti@swbell.net](mailto:ucausti@swbell.net).

At our Brazos Association Fall Meeting, we will have three **Ecclesiastical Councils**, where we will consider and vote on approval of three candidates for ordination to Christian ministry in the United Church of Christ: **Dr. Jo Jensen, Ken Ingram, and Janice Kerlee.** Approval of candidates for ordination is among the most important and interesting work we do as an Association. **Jo, Ken, and Janice** all received “yes” votes for ordination from the Church and Ministry Committee after their ordination interviews in September.

Jo is a member of the **Congregational Church of Austin.** She has served for several years as a board certified Catholic chaplain in the **Seton Healthcare Family at Dell Children’s Hospital** and, currently, at the **Shivers Cancer Center.** Jo has felt a call to ordained ministry for a number of years and made an intentional journey of faith to find a new faith home. She found that home at **Congregational Church.** In the past year, she finished her **Doctor of Ministry** degree at the **Graduate Theological Foundation**, joining in its partnership program for her doctoral project with Oxford University. She was awarded the **2013 Dorothy Day** prize in pastoral care at counseling at her graduation. After her ordination (pending Association approval), Jo will transfer her chaplaincy certification to the Association of Professional Chaplains, the certification organization for Protestant chaplains. There is a coming deadline in this process. Therefore, pending ordination approval, Jo will be ordained at Congregational on **Sunday, November 10th at 3 pm.**

**Ken Ingram** is a member of **United Christian Church of Austin.** He has a Master of Divinity from **Illiff School of Theology.** Ken did much of his preparation for ministry in the Denver area, then transferred to United Christian after moving to Austin and was accepted In Discernment by United Christian and the Brazos Association. He has completed a year of clinical pastoral education here and works as an on call chaplain at the **Heart Hospital of Austin.**

**Janice Kerlee** is a member of **Faith United Church of Christ** in Bryan. She is a chaplain at **Compassionate Care Hospice** in the Brazos Valley and recently served as the interim minister at **Evangelical United Church of Christ in Lyons.** Janice has her **Master of Divinity** from **Perkins School of Theology at SMU in Dallas.** She comes to us from the United Methodist Church, where she began her ministry training and served churches. After joining Faith, she entered our In Discernment process and became a licensed minister in our Association.

Each of their ordination papers have been sent to our churches, ministers, **Brazos Executive Board** members, and Church and Ministry members. We encourage churches to share those papers with all who will attend, and we encourage you to read these papers beforehand. Members of the Association who attend the meeting will have an opportunity to hear from and to question each candidate before voting. We hope to see you on November 9th in Austin.

Blessings in Christ,  
Liz Nash  
Brazos Association Minister



Nancy Brown (r) was among the many folks at church on Oct. 6th who wished Cathy Hubbs happy 91st birthday.

## Front Porch Lunch Team Seeks to Expand Meal Service and Volunteer Pool

by John Goff

**F**ront Porch Lunch was conceived eight or nine years ago as a response to a difficult decision we made to not permit street youth to camp on our front porch. For a couple of years or so we had permitted such camping, hoping to give the street youth in our area a place of shelter during the night. But our good intentions had unintended consequences. The night gatherings on our front porch would inevitably attract some who were more intent on disruptions. Fights would break out. Needles would be left in the garden. Property damage occurred. We were even advised by the street youth and Lifeworks staff that it would be better to close it. So we did. It made us feel un-neighborly to those we sought to help. So we – that is: the newly-formed **Board of Christian Outreach** - brainstormed ways to respond to the closing in a positive way, and from this front porch closing the **Front Porch Lunch** was born.

What is the **Front Porch Lunch**? It is just a lunch served every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month, noon to 1. We target the street youth that are the Lifeworks clients, timing it with the opening of the free clinic on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. But we serve more than that. Often we find out that some of our guests have “aged out” of the Lifeworks program, but are still close with some of the Lifeworks clients and come by for the company as well as the food. Or we are visited by much older homeless gentlemen, grateful for a filling meal. None are turned away. The lunch is staffed by three volunteers, who arrive about 11:30 or a bit earlier to make sandwiches and set up. We have a stable of a dozen volunteers who rotate, typically serving a couple of times every three months. We don’t actually serve lunch on our Front Porch, but rather in **Fellowship Hall**, with our guests sitting communally around the big table. It makes for a friendly atmosphere, and our guests seem to feel quite at home, speaking freely with their companions and often with the volunteers. We hear lots of stories as volunteers, some interesting and colorful, some tragic and heart-breaking.

For nearly its entire history, the **Front Porch Lunch** menu has not changed: turkey bologna sandwiches on wheat bread with lettuce, tomato and American cheese, with mustard and mayo on the side; a smaller number of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, bananas, chips, cookies, and milk and OJ. It’s easy to prepare, it’s good, and **Sara Ross** can buy the fixings in her sleep. We have also never served on anything BUT the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday. However, at long last, things are going to change a bit. The Front Porch Lunch team met in September as a group for the very first time. We talked about our experiences, and we talked about where we want the Front Porch Lunch to

go in the future. Ultimately we would love to serve a lunch on every Thursday, but less ambitiously we decided to start by adding one more Thursday a month. We will continue to do first and third Thursday, and won’t give up our tried-and-true menu on those days, but we are now planning on adding the second Thursday and, in the most shocking development of all, will serve a hot meal on those days – perhaps a soup with bread, or lasagna, or anything else that can be prepared ahead of time and then heated up.

To help make this new plan a reality, we are looking for more help: a few more volunteers, for one, and also folks to prepare a hot dish for up to 20 people that can be frozen and stored. If you are interested at all in either of these opportunities, please contact **John Goff**.

So who are our neighbors, these street youth who inhabit our sidewalk, our basement, eat with us, receive medical care in our building, who find comfort, and mercy within these walls?

A New York street youth assistant organization called **Safe Horizon** provides some remarkable facts:

- 1.7 million young people call the streets home every year.
- Approximately 40% of homeless youth identify as L(esbian) G(ay) B(isexual) or T(ransgendered) – compared to 10% of the general youth population in the United States.
- 46% of homeless youth escaped a home where they suffered physical abuse, while 17% left because of sexual abuse.
- Children who have been in foster care have a greater risk of becoming homeless at an earlier age than other youth, and are more likely to remain homeless for a longer period of time.
- 43% of homeless young men and 39% of homeless young women say they were assaulted with a weapon while living on the streets.
- Homeless youth suffer significant mental health problems that include depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, and suicidal thoughts.

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## “GREENING” OUR CHURCH FIRST STEPS By Marilyn Vaché

If you’ve been to any of a number of sermons in the last year or two you know Rev. Tom VandeStadt’s passion for responding to climate change. With his guidance members of the congregation have formed the **Green Team**, and its first effort is to reduce our church’s use of energy.

It has two main tracks right now: educating its members and the congregation about sustainable use of resources and getting an energy audit of the building. For both we are relying on pioneering churches and organizations, especially the **Interfaith Environmental Network (IEN)**. This local group of diverse clergy holds symposia the first Tuesday of each month and has also produced (with Tom playing a major role) a handbook called **Becoming Carbon Positive**: [www.interfaithenvironment.org/resources/downloads/becoming-carbon-positive\\_1s.pdf](http://www.interfaithenvironment.org/resources/downloads/becoming-carbon-positive_1s.pdf)

**St David’s Episcopal, Highland Park Baptist, Unitarian Universalist church and Austin Zen Center** are also models and resources, as are national web sites full of theological and practical inspiration: <http://greenfaith.org> and <http://www.webofcreation.org>

Members of the team are meeting with representatives from **Austin Energy** and its contractors and with leadership of **Climate Buddies** (an IEN partner) to arrange for energy audits and an estimate of our “carbon footprint,” that is, how much carbon we burn and therefore how much carbon dioxide we produce. This should lead to a plan for improving insulation, fixing energy leaks around windows, and other big projects. In the meantime, there are smaller, obvious changes to be made, such as purchasing motion detecting light switches, using **LED** lights with

dimmers, and putting sun-blocking films on windows. To reduce water use, a related topic, we could purchase low-flow toilets and improve our landscaping. Look for fundraising efforts to get these projects started.

Other plans include:

- seeking certification as a **Green** congregation from the **City of Austin, Green Faith**, or the UCC; this would help us document and recognize our achievements and further motivate us to stretch towards bigger goals:
- promoting and tracking carbon savings not only in our church but also in our households;
- sharing information about where to recycle batteries and hazardous waste;
- preparing presentations for UCC meetings such as the **Brazos Association** (meeting at our church November 10) and having a workshop on xeriscaping.

Many hands are needed, so please consider coming to the next meeting of the **Green Team** after church, **Sunday, November 24**. Can you help us with a web page of resources? How about preparing posters, flyers, and brochures? Or presenting your own experience in purchasing carbon offsets or harvesting rainwater? Speak to **Tom, Liz Nash, Bill Mueller, Kristen Parkhill, Sara Darter, John Moore, or Marilyn Vaché** to ask about getting involved.

Marilyn Vaché



(l—r) Paula, Michael, Giovanni, Fracasso, Rambie and Fran Briggs, Nodie and Dennis Murphy at Peter Pan Golf.



Pat and Mel Oakes with John and Eleanor Towery.  
Their daughter Mary took the photo.

daughter **Claudia Tarvin Whitehead** and her family in Georgetown. Mary was delighted to tell them that brother **Ches** will be a grandfather in February (son **KC** and daughter-in-law **Kendra** are the happy parents-to-be). After a great time in Vicksburg—and a long time in the car, Pat and Mel got home the next Monday—and that Friday headed to Washington, D.C., for a ten day visit with daughter **Sarah** and her husband **Joe Pierce**.

## Front Porch Lunch Team Seeks to Expand Meal Schedule

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- About 75% of street youth are engaged in substance abuse.
- Children living on the streets are more likely to engage in “survival sex” – trading sex to gain food, clothing, drugs, money, or just for a safe place to sleep at night.
- 17% of homeless youth are HIV-positive.
- Every year, approximately 5,000 homeless young people will die because of assault, illness, or suicide while on the street.

These statistics are as enlightening as they are tragic – a window into the difficult life of a young homeless person. And while greater understanding is important, there is no substitute for personal contact – for demonstrating love and mercy, for becoming the neighbor Jesus asks us to be. The **Front Porch Lunch** team thanks you all for your long-standing support of the Lunch and other street youth ministries of this church, and we encourage you to partici-

## CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN, UCC Financial Pledge – 2014

Our church is a community of people responding to Jesus’ call to follow him. Opening ourselves to and living in the spirit of God, we are engaged in the ongoing project of creating a community that liberates, heals, reconciles, pursues justice, and promotes peace.

Stewardship is the means through which we participate in the ongoing creation of this community. The more we discern, open ourselves to, and live in God’s spirit, the more God’s grace is manifested in and through us.

Our church budget reflects our financial commitment to the ongoing creation of this liberating, healing, reconciling, justice-seeking, peace-promoting community of Jesus’ disciples that we call the Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ.

Discerning Jesus Christ’s call to me while reflecting on my commitment to the on-going creation of the Congregational Church of Austin, UCC, and taking stock of my financial resources, I am prepared to pledge the following amount for the ongoing work of the church in 2014.

**Please circle one**

\_\_\_\_\_ per week                      per month                      per year

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

The Congregational Church of Austin  
408 West 23rd Street  
Austin, Texas 78705-5214

**Return Service Requested**

## **Deadline for December Visitor—November 21st**

### **Happy Birthday**

to the following CCA members and friends who have a birthday this month!

- 1 Tommie Pinkard
- 2 Wilmer Brown, Celia Ross
- 4 Nannette Strickland
- 7 Ann Hubbs  
Tom VandeStadt
- 8 Setsuko Kaneda, Maggie Taylor
- 9 Craig Barrett  
Bree Hawes-Domingue
- 12 Michael Adams, Harrison Tucker
- 14 Hulen Brown
- 16 Norma Hawes
- 17 Dennis Murphy
- 18 Jennifer Bratton, Jacob Bardati
- 22 Mariah Newell
- 23 Kathleen Strong, Terri Ocean
- 24 Jim Howicz
- 27 Tess Howicz
- 30 Betty Bodman