

## CROSSROADS DISTRICT

### FOR INFORMATION

Following the 2019 Annual Conference, the Crossroads District was optimistic about the coming year. Most of the major recovery work following Hurricane Harvey was completed and the churches were actively engaged in kingdom work.

In September, the District Professionals' Meeting consisted of an all-day working retreat centered on the District's new ministry plan. During the retreat, a ministry grant opportunity was announced for those churches offering a new ministry outside of their buildings before or during Advent. Ten churches received small grants and went out into their communities to carry the message of Jesus Christ.

Early 2020 brought a huge challenge in the form of the coronavirus pandemic. Pastors and worship leaders who thought they were high-tech because they could operate a computer or a smart phone, were suddenly required to be videographers and sound technicians with skills that would qualify them for studio work in Hollywood. Many pastors who did have those skills were quick to help others. Others shared webinars and articles from the Conference website with their neighbors and friends.

The Covid-19 shut down also impacted many churches financially. With no services and many of their congregation members out of work, some of our smallest churches were in a dire situation. A Golden Rule Fund was created, and the Crossroads District churches were invited to contribute what they could to help those less financially stable. The response was overwhelming, and no church had to discontinue its mission.

In November, a virtual District-wide Charge Conference was held. Once the business items were taken care of, we were treated to a collage of pictures of the mission work done by our churches during this difficult time. In addition to the joy of seeing familiar faces we have not seen for a long time, the resourcefulness and resilience exhibited in those pictures are both awesome and inspiring!

Here is a partial list of what we saw: Pumpkin Patch at Victoria FUMC; Pumpkin Decorating at La Trinidad, Seguin; Cross of flowers at Martindale UMC; Diaper drive at Bastrop FUMC; Bastrop FUMC received grant money for Ministries Within the Community; Wesley Harper, Seguin, Back to School Drive; Outdoor Pentecost Service at Gonzalez FUMC; Drive Through Communion at Cedar Creek UMC; Gonzales Reading Program, Henson Chapel and Evans Chapel, Gonzales; Hallettsville FUMC Drive by Birthday Party; Drive Through Communion at Edna FUMC; Community Prayer Walk at La Trinidad, Seguin; William Taylor UMC started Lamb and Sheep Ministries thanks to grant from MHM; Outdoor Services and Communion at Cedar Creek UMC; District UMM and Texas Ramp Project completed many ramps in the district; New Prayer Garden at

Wesley Harper UMC; “Let’s Keep the Church Doors Open” at Schulenburg FUMC (improved ventilation during pandemic); Annual Pumpkin Patch held by Seguin FUMC Youth; Community-Wide Shoe Giveaway at Wesley Harper UMC; and Breast Cancer Awareness Event at Wesley Harper UMC.

Also, in November, a District Conference was held for the purpose of considering the conveyance of the Cathedral Oaks Retreat and Worship Center property to a newly formed not-for-profit organization. The new corporation establishes an ecumenical partnership between the Cathedral Oaks corporation and PH Ministries (St. Francis Oaks). The District Conference approved the conveyance and plans are underway for the new entity to locate and obtain grants and other funding avenues.

The year 2021 brought a new position in the District staff. Fritzi Simon was named the District Mission Coordinator and will work with the District Superintendent and the District Strategy Team to facilitate and coordinate mission and mission work throughout the District. While this position is “still under construction,” we are excited about how God will use this new venture.

After much discussion about how to navigate COVID and youth activities, Mid Winter Youth Retreat was held April 17th. It was condensed into one fun-filled day at El Shaddai Ranch in Yorktown. It was an awesome day, filled with some really good worship and messages that reminded us of the importance of rooting ourselves in community. After distancing and isolating ourselves for so long over the last year, it felt so good to be together and to just fellowship with one another again. There were 4 district churches represented with a total of 22 youth and about 8-10 adult volunteers. We worshipped together, played games, and worked in teams to complete the ropes-course challenge. The Holy Spirit moved among us and brought us closer to Jesus. At the end of the day, we were all already thinking about and looking forward to the next Mid-Winter when we’d be able to do this all over again.

In summary, despite the heartaches and worries caused by the pandemic, the Crossroads District has not only survived, but resolutely followed His command to “. . . go and make disciples of all nations. . .” Thanks Be to God.