



The Messenger

January 2021

Office Staff

Rev. G. Metzger, *Guest Pastor*
Loreen Rhodes, *Secretary*
Mindy Malatek, *Pastor's Assistant*
Ted Neely, *Treasurer*
Patsy Schmitt, *Custodian*

Church Council

Kelly Janak, *President*
Ross Jaster, *Vice President*
Emily Latimer, *Secretary*
Marianne Muehr, *Worship*
Hugo Richter, *Property/PPR*
Kristy Janak Janecka, *Music*
Pam Schoeneberg,
Youth/Christian Education
Dora Vazquez, *Fellowship*
Darla Maxwell
*Missions/Wider Church/
Evangelism/Stewardship*
Hal Leppin, *At Large*

Volunteers

Deena Richter — *Offering
Contributions Record Keeper*
Ed Hilley —
Outside Church Sign Updates
Kenneth & Julia Krizak —
Care of & Changing Altar Cloths
Chris & Gretchen Maddux —
Keeping Oil in Altar Candles

Organists/Pianists

Karen Beken
Carolyn H. Dahse
Jenny Grohmann
Joan Hunsicker

Choir Director

Susan Miculka

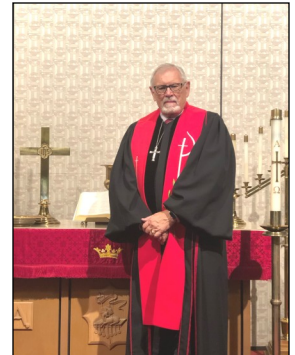
Song Leaders

Dickie Muehr
Ross Jaster

“...they left for their own country by another road.” Mt. 2:12b

The church was finally decorated. The participants of the Christmas pageant's final practice were departing. Which meant there would be calmness in the church. In this calmness, RevM would finally be able to focus on preparations for the up coming services. Like thunder clapping across the heavens, the church's peacefulness was shattered as Little Jake broke through the door. He was adorned with a fresh coating of snow. Standing in the doorway Jake did his best to stomp himself clean.

While the stomping was near completion, Jake walked directly into RevM's office, and as always made himself comfortable. Just as his tush hit the cushion, words began flowing from Jake's mouth. “I just visited Pastor Sven. He proved he knows less than you. He could not even answer my simplest questions. Then again, what can you expect from a person who likes lutefisk and prepares it on days when you can't even vent the house.



“Jake, with your massive depth of theological comprehension what questions could you ask that Sven couldn't answer? He might not know a lot about greasing a bear trap, but I find his scholarship very solid.”

“RevM, let me ask you the same questions. Maybe you won't be so dumb! First question, how many Wise men came to the manger to visit baby Jesus?”

“No one knows the exact number of Magi. Besides, they never arrived at Bethlehem's manger. Jesus could have been around seven years old by the time they finally arrived.”

“RevM, you just fell in the same hole of misinformation as Pastor Sven. Retch showed me a card he received from his Aunt. On the card's front picture, there were three Wise men and Jesus was lying in the feed trough. There were also shepherds standing around the Wise men. I know big named card companies would never send out false information!”

“Jake, I thought you wanted to know what was biblically accurate, not supporting material for greeting card companies. I wonder if Sven also shared that the Wise men are in Matthew's Gospel and the shepherds are in Luke's Gospel.”

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"I think he said something about that. Did Sven call you before I came so you could compare notes? I know how you two like to gang up on a person. So, if the picture on Retch's card is so wrong, why are they all included in your display? I saw some Wise men in your manger set; along with a baby and shepherds. Why aren't you practicing what you believe?"

"Jake, you are correct. But, sometimes taking the easy path is better than being accurate. Regardless where we place the Magi, there are numerous lessons they have taught us. These lessons far exceed what we either know or wish we knew.

1. God extended an invitation to foreigners as well as to the expected audience. It was the foreigners who most often accepted Jesus' ministry.
2. The Magi were willing to travel into a great unknown; trusting in the possibility of a God they had never known. Not only were they willing to travel, but they put aside all that seemed important to them in order to seek an even greater answer.
3. In preparing for this journey, they brought their best gifts to present at the journey's end.
4. They were not afraid to move beyond their mistakes as they followed the path of the anticipated.
5. For me the most important lesson is found in the concluding words of their story; **and they returned home by a different way.** They were willing to be transformed through the gift of God. They became new creations of the Creating God.

Rather than trying to prove what we will never know, it would be much better to become more pliable in the Potter's Hands. We would be much better off if we allowed Divine experiences to move us in new and unexpected directions.

After all that, Jake departed by the same door!

May the Blessings of the New Year provide numerous opportunities for you to travel by a different way!

Pastor Gerry

A Special **THANK YOU**

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Faith:

Karen and I thank you all for your generous Christmas gifts, beautiful messages, and joy filled spirit. It has been an ever increasing blessing to be part of your church family. Now as we move into the New Year, we are invited to embrace all that God has in store for us as individuals and as a community.

In our time together, I am constantly impressed with your willingness to accept ministries of bold possibilities as we ever move forward.

Shalom,

Pastor Gerry

www.weimartxucc.com



Weimar UCC has an informative website. If you haven't looked at it, you might do so.

For your information, any donations made on line can be "designated" for a particular purpose by pressing "donate" and following directions.



What is happening at Weimar UCC

Sermon Titles/Scriptures for January

- January 3rd** Second Sunday after Christmas—
Rev. Gerry Metzger
"Bring—Receive"
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14, Isaiah 60:1-6, Matthew 2:1-12
- January 10th** The Baptism of Christ—
Rev. Gerry Metzger
"Living Water"
Psalm 29, Genesis 1:1-5, Mark 1:4-11
- January 17th** Second Sunday after Epiphany—
Rev. Gerry Metzger
"Found Treasure"
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18, 1 Samuel 3:1-20, John 1:43--51
- January 24th** Third Sunday after Epiphany—
Rev. Gerry Metzger
"Follow Me"
Psalm 62:5-12, Jonah 3:1-5, 10, Mark 1:14-20
- January 31st** Fourth Sunday after Epiphany—
Rev. Gerry Metzger
"Being Authentic"
Psalm 111, Deuteronomy 18:15-20, Mark 1:21-28

*All sermon titles, scriptures and pastor are subject to change.

January Volunteers

He who will unlock & lock-up the
building and adjust the air early each
Sunday —

Kelly Janak & Ross Jaster

Those who will care for the
Sirnic Cemetery Plot —

The Richter Family

Thanks to All of you!

Newsletter Editors

Mindy Malatek & Loreen Rhodes



Christmas Food Baskets Helped Many in the Local Community

The true spirit of Christmas was once again demonstrated on the morning of Saturday, December 19th. Volunteers gathered at our fellowship hall to assist with the Weimar Ministerial Alliance Christmas food basket giveaway. The food was graciously donated by the participating churches, organizations, and individuals. Sixty baskets were assembled and distributed!

Those participating from Weimar UCC included Loreen Rhodes and Mindy Malatek (*providing all the set up assistance*), Hugo Richter, Emily Wied, Benita, Rayleigh, and Brinson Huetten, Abigail Hilley, and Jenny Grohmann.

A special thank you goes to our own Weimar UCC for allowing us to use the fellowship hall, and to all of the various local churches, organizations, and individuals who participated! Our community is blessed with many generous people!! A very generous monetary donation was received from the members of Trinity Church in New Bielau, and because of that, a \$20 gift card for Kasper's Meat Market was included in each of the food baskets!

Heart of Texas Association News

Faith UCC in New Braunfels is undergoing a major transition. As of January 1, 2021, Scott Martin will be retiring as Pastor. Scott is a friend to many of us. He leaves Faith with our great appreciation for his ministry and many good wishes. The church has called Carla Cheatham to be their Designated Term Pastor. This is a type of transitional pastor that is charged with helping the church move toward specific goals, with the possibility of being considered as the settled (called and more permanent) pastor if both sides agree. Carla is the author of *Hospice Whispers: Stories of Life* and leads the Carla Cheatham Consulting Group, which trains people in care giving fields in ethical care giving. She has served in hospice and parish ministry. We join Faith and Carla in great hope for their work and future in ministry together.

Our Association Committee on Ministry has granted Amelia Fulbright "Seeking Privilege of Call" status in the United Church of Christ. This status means that Amelia, who was ordained at First Baptist Church of Austin, has been recommended for ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ by our Committee on Ministry and will have an Ecclesiastical Council to be voted on for ministerial standing at our Association Spring Meeting. She will also be seeking a call to ministry in a UCC church. Amelia is currently the Designated Senior Pastor at University Baptist Church in Austin, where she served as the Associate Minister earlier in her ministry for several years. Before her current work, she was the founding Executive Director of Labyrinth Progressive Student Ministries at the University of Texas at Austin. Labyrinth is supported by a number of Austin area churches including Congregational Church of Austin and Church of the Savior, among others. Amelia put together Labyrinth and the coalition of supporting churches to form a powerful ministry that offers worship, Bible study, meditation, and community to students who are devout, questioning, and on a journey. We welcome Amelia to the Heart of Texas Association.

I rejoice to share with you that James Pennington, Senior Pastor of First Church UCC of Phoenix, Arizona, will begin his tenure as Executive Director of Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi, on February 22, 2021. The Back Bay Mission Board has had a gratitude-filled time of

farewell with retiring Executive Director Alice Graham, whose work has been transformative and excellent. As many of you know, Back Bay Mission is a partner ministry with the United Church of Christ, does magnificent outreach work among the poorest people of the area, and hosts work camps for mainly UCC groups from across the country. James comes with extensive non-profit leadership experience prior to becoming a UCC minister. At First Church, he has led a ministry that expanded the church's outreach to those with no place to live, to refugees, and as a leading institution advocating for those with the least voice and poorest among us. I feel a special joy in making this announcement after serving on the search committee that recommended him. I hope many of us will find a way to get out to Biloxi to see and be part of doing God's work at Back Bay Mission.

Blessings in Christ,
Liz Nash, Association Minister



Our drive-thru baked potato dinner fundraiser was a success, thanks to the hard work of so many volunteers! Five hundred tickets were sold this year!!

With the pandemic in full gear at this time, it was first thought the fundraiser might need to be cancelled this year; however, a way was found to get around that. Thanks to everyone involved.



In Memory of Mr. James Stock, from:

Louis & Linda Barrilleaux (Outside Storage Bldg.)

In Memory of Mrs. Joyce Terrell, from:

Chris & Gretchen Maddux (*General Fund*)

In Honor of the Birth of Cohen Kimball Hessler, from:

Ross A. Jaster (*Children's Ministry*)

In Memory of Mrs. Alice Hattermann, from:

Sally Estrada (Outside Storage Bldg.)

In Memory of Mrs. Lillian Kahlden, from:

Lanice Oeltjen-Hunger (*Building Fund*)

Mary Ann & Larry Hatfield (*Building Fund*)

Hugo & Deena Richter (*Outside Storage Bldg.*)

Elaine Brandt (*Ratliff Music Fund*)

Sandra & Lawrence DiFilippo (*Children's Ministry*)

Louis & Linda Barrilleaux (Outside Storage Bldg.)

David & Delores Raab (Outside Storage Bldg.)

Billie Grohmann (*Building Fund*)

Linda & Jack Holman (Outside Storage Bldg.)

Margie Hoffman (*Ratliff Music Fund*)

Del & Dell Berger (*Mission Fund*)

Laverne Wilson (Church Bldg. Fund)

Nancy & Bobby Hajek (Church Bldg. Fund)

Thanks to all of you for your memorial donations.
This list of funds might be helpful to some.

Memorial Gift Fund Suggestions

Building Fund, Children's Ministry Fund
Sirnic Memorial Endowment Fund, Parsonage Fund
Ratliff Memorial Music Fund, Church Landscaping Fund
Mission Fund, New Church Start Fund
Outside Storage Building Fund, General Operating Fund
Weimar UCC Evening Circle (*recently added*)

*(Any memorial donations made after December 29th
will be listed in the next newsletter.)*



January

Liturgists:

3rd—Angela Wied
10th—Amy Koehn
17th—Ryan Brandt
24th—Marianne Muehr
31st—Mike Antosh

Acolytes:

3rd—Chole Brandt & Alexander Vazquez
10h—Gavin Schoeneberg & Brinson Huetten
17th & 24th—Emily Wied & Caroline Koehn
31st—Madeline Antosh & Brock Antosh

Communion Stewards:

3rd—Wayne & Jo Lynn McDonald

Ushers:

3rd & 10th—Mack & Debbie Janak*,
Hal & Teresa Leppin
17th, 24th & 31st—Mark & Valerie Harmon*,
Jane Armontrout, Jo Lynn McDonald

Greeters:

3rd & 10th—Kelly & Kathy Janak
17th, 24th, & 31st—Frank & Joyce Gosney

Altar Flowers:

3rd—David & Debbie Little and Dennis Knebel
In Memory of M/M Edwin Knebel & Harvey Knebel
10th—Alan & Amy Koehn
In Memory of Arlene; and their Parents—
Wilton & Sylvia Leppin and Lester & Adela Koehn
17th—Leon Hattermann & Family
In Loving Memory of Alice Hattermann
24th—Harris & Sandy Kainer
In Memory of Robert & Ella Keel, Robert W. Keel,
and Edgar, Helen and Davis Kainer
31st—Ross A. Jaster
In Memory of Rosalie “Book” Chapel

**Altar Flowers — You will be assigned each year, hopefully around this same date.

Please Remember —

If for any reason you don't feel comfortable attending church during this time, please contact the office as soon as possible.



*(If you see an omission or error on this list,
please call the church office so a correction can be made.)*

Solitude as Soul Care

(From The Newsletter)

Richard J. Foster (Celebration of Discipline) says solitude is “more a state of mind and heart” than a place: “There is a solitude of the heart that can be maintained at all times. Crowds, or the lack of them, have little to do with this inward attentiveness.”

Although Jesus preferred crowd-free alone times, that's not always feasible. But, no matter your surroundings and responsibilities, you can carve out intentional time to “be still.”

Try these tips for adding solitude to your life:

- Take a day. Every month or two, enjoy a day of solitude. Turn off your phone, and spend the day with God.
- Take an hour. Treat this time as an important calendar appointment. Keep it free.
- Take a minute. Before a big meeting or as you're answering the phone, breathe deeply and invite God into the moment.



Our annual congregational meeting will be on January 17, 2021, immediately after the worship service.

For the handout at this meeting, information is needed from: Church Secretary, Church Treasurer, Evening Circle, Pastor(?), and the Council President. This information is due in the church office by January 6th.

Members are encouraged to be present for this important meeting where we will conduct the business of the church, including:

- Approve an expense budget for 2021;
- Elect new church council members; and,
- Elect representatives to the 2021 annual meeting of the South Central Conference.



Each February we prepare an updated “Members and Family Roster” which shows names and contact information for our church members and their families. For this, we need names, physical addresses, mailing addresses, home and/or cell phone, and e-mail addresses.

Please carefully review your listing in the 2020 Roster, update where needed, and provide the requested information to the office by no later than January 18.



Worship Attendance

December 6th—45
December 13th—50
December 20th—80 (*Children's Pageant*)
December 27th— 36
(December Average — 53)
Christmas Eve — 89

These attendance records show how many folks attended the services in the sanctuary. Services are streamed due to the pandemic, and an average of **140 views per Sunday** are being watched over Facebook and YouTube combined.

Weimar UCC Dates to Remember

- Confirmation class meets every 1st and 3rd Sunday
- Un-decorate after services on January 10.
- Evening Circle Meeting—January 12 at 5:00pm
- Annual Congregational Meeting — January 17
- Council Meeting, January 20 at 7:00pm
- Newsletter articles are due by January 20
- Please help keep our community food pantry stocked. Canned soups are requested during January. The collection box is in the church foyer.



**WEIMAR UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

Post Office Box 188
Weimar TX 78962

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

January 2021

Stamp

Rev. Gerald Metzger—Guest Pastor
Office: 979-725-8315
ucadmin@cvctx.com weimaruc@cvctx.com
Church is located at 403 West Main Street.

Sunday Morning Study at 9:00
Sunday Worship Service — 9:30am
(Services are streamed over
Facebook and YouTube. Weimar UCC

Weimar United Church of Christ (UCC)

403 West Main Street

Weimar TX

(Mail: PO Box 188, Weimar TX 78962)



Happy New Year!