

The Connection Point

January 2023 - Vol. 1, No. 1



Wrapping Up December

by Judy Johnson



While our Creative Christian Women's group (CCW) works on many projects year round, the painter's group is busiest near Christmas as they hand-paint tote bags and Christmas stockings. These are donated to Safe Haven, a battered women's shelter, located in Arlington and Ft Worth.



Over an 8 year span, donations have steadily increased to 180 tote bags and 181 stockings provided this year! To date, a grand total of 536 bags and 639 stockings have been donated. Each bag and stocking is blessed and prayed over by Pastor Bill and the church in hopes the recipient will feel God's unconditional and abiding love. The group asks for prayers to continue God's work through this ministry in the new year.

What's Inside:



Austin Street Center

by Jimmy Love

Page 7



Music for a New Year

by Scott Scheetz

Page 3



Children's Ministry

by Betsy Modrzejewski

Page 5

Upcoming Events:

Women's Retreat

Saturday, Jan. 14, 2023

A Note from the Pastor

Is It Really NEW?

Rev. Bill Eason



Don't remember the prior things; don't ponder ancient history. Look! I'm doing a new thing; now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness.

- Isaiah 43:18-19, Common English Bible

A new year is upon us! What will it be? What will our future hold? What will 2023 bring? These are just some of the endless questions that captivate our minds and often causes a little anxiety and fear. Before we speak much about our hopes and dreams for 2023, it is important for us to address 2022. Thank you to each of you who made 2022 such a wonderful year at Fellowship United Methodist Church. Your loving service and generous support have made 2022 a most wonderful year. Fellowship is a better church because of you! Thank you!

As we embark on 2023, let's be brave and dream great dreams for Fellowship! Let's embrace this year with celebration and courage. Let's also not be imprisoned by our past or weighed down with denominational divisions. In the above scripture found in the Old Testament book of Isaiah, we find this scripture at a time when the past was painful for many faithful Jews. They found themselves living in captivity in Babylon, dreaming for a day that they could return to their homeland and worship God in their holy city of Jerusalem. Their past became a distant memory and confined them in that present moment. Their future was uncertain.

The scripture in Isaiah reminds us all that we are not prisoners to our past - whether glorious or not. God reminds us to not remember prior things, but focus on God doing something new in the very present and future moments. Isn't this the promise of Advent - that God is coming to us to do something new? Didn't God do something new with Jesus' birth in Bethlehem?

We are challenged in these "new year" moments to consider that God is willing to do something new right here at Fellowship. God is fully and abundantly capable of doing something new. Not just something that has been done before, but something totally new, something the world has never seen before. Consider the wisdom of Hebrews 8:13, "When it says new, it makes the first obsolete. And if something is old and outdated, it's close to disappearing." I know, that is a holy and audacious dream. Why not? Why not dream the great dreams of God's kingdom among us?

I invite you to join me in January as we consider the wonderful and amazing capabilities of God's creative spirit doing something new right here at Fellowship United Methodist Church. Let's be brave and courageous! Let's be bold and adventurous. Let's be the disciples God has called and expects us to be. Let's make 2023 the most amazing year ever! This is our time! This is our moment! We are Fellowship! We are family! Bring on the new year! We are ready!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Bill Eason, Senior Pastor

Music Ministry



Music for a New Year

by Scott Scheetz

I cannot believe that we are already starting a new year. 2023 is upon us and with that new year comes one of my favorite hymns. That's right. There is music that ties in with a new year. Yes, everyone knows about *Auld Lang Syne*, but we're going to be looking at the hymn *In Dir Ist Freude*, which translates as *In Thee Is Gladness*. This hymn is found in our hymnal on page 169.

This hymn's joyful and dance-like melody was written in 1591 by Italian priest and composer, Giovanni G. Gastoldi. This is one of many *Balletti* (dance-like songs) written by Gastoldi. From 1592-1608 he served as music director at the Church of the Santa Babaras in Mantua, Italy. Not much else is known about his life other than he left behind a large repertoire of music including court music and church music, but he is best known for his *Balletti*, which influenced later composers.

The text is attributed to Johann Lindemann and first appeared in his collection of 20 Christmas Carols in 1594. Born in Germany in 1550, he is most well known for his pairing of Italian court music with the German Choral tradition. He served as a cantor at a church in Gotha in the early 1570s. Unfortunately most of his works have been lost except a few collections, leading to the uncertainty of his authorship of this hymn.

Catherine Winkworth published her English translation of this German choral in 1858. She was one of the best and most prolific translators of the German chorals. Her translations were faithful to the material and carefully matched the character and rhyme of the chorals. Her translation retains the joyful and dance-like character of the original hymn.

The hymn reflects on the joy of walking closely with God through the ups and downs of life. The two verses

alternate the promise of God's providence followed by praise resulting in a beautiful tapestry of promise, hope, praise, and thanksgiving.

*In thee is gladness, amid all sadness,
Jesus, sunshine of my heart.
By thee are given the gifts of heaven,
thou the true Redeemer art.
Our souls thou makest, our bonds thou breakest;
who trusts thee surely hath built securely,
and stands forever. Alleluia!
Our hearts are pining to see thy shining;
dying or living, to thee are cleaving;
naught can us sever. Alleluia!*

The dance-like character of the music reinforces the idea of God's sustaining care which can overpower difficult times.

*If God be ours, we fear no powers,
not of earth or sin or death.
God sees and blesses in worst distresses,
and can change them in a breath.
Wherefore the story tell of God's glory
with heart and voices; all heaven rejoices,
singing forever: Alleluia!
We shout for gladness, triumph o'er sadness,
loving and praising, voices still raising
glad hymns forever: Alleluia!*

I am reminded of Romans 8:38-39:

*For I am convinced that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor
things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor
depth, nor anything else in all creation will be
able to separate us from the love of God in
Christ Jesus our Lord.*

This hymn is typically categorized as a general hymn of praise as well as a hymn for the new year. As we begin this new year, what would it look like to truly walk closely with God and see God as the sunshine of our heart. As you meditate on the words of this hymn, find hope that our God will provide, care for, and sustain us in this upcoming year and years to come.

Youth Ministry

by Tyler Sweatt

FTC Youth wrapped up the year of 2022 with a successful Chili Cook off to help fundraise money to support our Summer mission trips. We would like to congratulate our winners the Raspberries



and the Millicans!



We would also like to thank everyone who came out and supported such a special night!



The youth group also capped off the year with a super fun Christmas party, we look forward to seeing what 2023 has in store for our wonderful youth group! Thank you for being such a supportive church Family!!



Children's Ministry



A Note from Betsy

The “heart” of Fellowship UMC is evident in the gracious way you have welcomed me into the Fellowship family. Thank you for your prayers, kind gestures and encouraging words as I begin my time with you. The first service I attended at Fellowship, I was amazed by the beautiful voices of the Children's Choir and over the past couple of weeks I have had the pleasure of sitting in on various children's programs, Wonderful things are happening at Fellowship and I cannot wait to see how God works this year in Children's Ministry.

A Look Back...

For the last few months, children at Fellowship have been traveling through “God's Big Story”. We have seen how God has loved us throughout history. God always has a plan and even when we have doubts, we can trust that God keeps His promises. When we are up against what seem like impossible odds, we have a relationship with our God who can do the impossible. Because of God's love we can find joy, have hope and discover peace.

A Glimpse into January

K-5th Grade

“Think Tank”

This month, our theme is “Think Tank”. God designed us with a natural curiosity to pursue finding the answers to life's questions. We will be exploring, discovering new things about God all month (and year!).

Our memory verse for January comes from Proverbs 2:6, “The Lord gives wisdom. Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.” Through this verse we are reminded that the source of wisdom is God. The best way to know and understand about God's world and our place in it is to have a relationship

with Him through Jesus. We will work to discover new things about God by learning stories about Jesus. This month our lessons include:

- The Wise Men Visit Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12)
Never stop searching for what is true.
- Boy Jesus at the Temple (Luke 2:41-52)
Knowing God is the most important thing.
- Jesus' Baptism (John 1:19-42, John 3:22-36)
When you discover something new, it can change you.
- Jesus is Tempted in the Desert. (Luke 4:1-13)
Remembering what is true can help you make the wise choice.
- John the Baptist in Prison (Matthew 11:1-6)
If you don't understand something, ask.

Preschool

“Wonderful Workshop”

For our preschoolers, this month's theme is “Wonderful Workshop”. We will be discovering the amazing things Jesus did.

- Week 1: Twelve-year-old Jesus engages everyone at the temple
- Week 2: Jesus' first miracle
- Week 3: Jesus calms the storm
- Week 4: Jesus fills his disciples' nets with fish.
- Week 5: Jesus uses his powers to show kindness to a man born blind

We cannot wait to tinker and create together as we learn about the amazing works of Jesus in our Wonderful Workshop!

Final Thoughts

I am excited to see how God will work in the lives of our children this year and am honored to serve at Fellowship. Please keep the Children's Ministry in your prayers as we embark on a new year.

Fellowship Friends Preschool

by Barbara Rich-Clark

Our “Gifts from God” Christmas program was a huge success with the children learning about the many gifts that we received from God including the most important of all, Jesus. The children had a fantastic time singing about the gifts that Ms. Chandra helped open and learning about each aspect of the Christmas story. Our parents joined us for this program and then had the opportunity to have a pizza lunch with their child’s class and a small Christmas party in each classroom. A great time was had by all.

I want to thank those that made this special program come together. Ms. Alison Hopps (Music), Ms. Chandra Yeschenko (Chapel), Harry Ebbeson (Media), Ms. DeeDee Sifuentes (Dance) and the entire Fellowship Friends staff did a wonderful job of making this a team effort. We are blessed to have so many talented people on our staff.



As we look forward to the New Year and what is ahead, we start to prepare ourselves for fall registration. Registration packets will start going out to currently enrolled students on January 23, 2023. If you would like to schedule a tour or be put on the mailing list for a fall packet, please contact us at barbara@fumctc.com or preschool@fumctc.com.

Our annual TK (transitional kindergarten) parent night is scheduled for January 12, 2023. For those parents interested in learning more about our fantastic program, contact the office for details.

Adult Ministry

New Year, New You: 2023 Women’s Retreat

by Angela Newell

We are excited to be joining with Vista Ridge UMC, led by senior pastor Ashley Anne Sipe, for a one-day women's retreat focused on "New Year, New You." In addition to some fantastic Bible teaching, there will be

worship songs, as well as break-out sessions focused on mental health and other self-care topics, and fun new skills.

Cost will be \$30, and childcare is available.

Use the QR Code to sign up for the retreat!



Missions

Austin Street Center

by Jimmy Love



Austin Street Center has provided shelter and basic needs to the homeless since 1983. They help clients regain their independence and find a permanent place to call home. Other services include medical health care, mental health care, employment services, spiritual services, substance use treatment, benefits navigation, housing focused case management, and transportation assistance. This all takes place at the new 60,000-square-foot 24/7 Austin Street Center in Dallas.



FUMC makes early morning visits to the Austin Street Center once a quarter to feed their clients. This is a great ministry for a family, youth, or anyone looking for a way to serve the homeless community. DFW United Methodist churches have supported this since 1992.



Food donations are dropped off at the church on a Saturday morning. The remaining food is purchased and volunteers show up Saturday evening to cook and assemble. Volunteers meet early Sunday morning to deliver and serve breakfast at the shelter. Anyone over the age of 10 can cook and/or serve if accompanied by a parent or guardian. We need more donations and volunteers due to the new and larger facility which can now serve up to 500 clients for breakfast.





www.roanokefoodpantry.org



How you can help serve our community needs!
Purchase any of the items below:

**Shampoo
(all types)**

**Deodorant
(all types)**

**Toothbrushes
(individually packaged)**

Toothpaste

Bring them to church and place them in the
labeled bins in the narthex.

Our youth will deliver the donations to the
Roanoke Food Pantry.

Thank you for your generosity!

Recurring Weekly Events:

Sunday

- 9:00 am Modern Worship
- 11:00 am Traditional Worship
- 5:00 pm Youth Group
- 5:00 pm Adult Bible Study

Monday

- 10:00 am Creative Christian Women

Tuesday

- 6:45 am Men's Bible Study (at Dove Creek Cafe)
- 8:30 am Men's Bible Study (at Dove Creek Cafe)

Wednesday

- 5:00 pm Wednesday Night Dinner
- 5:30 pm Children's Bible Study
- 6:00 pm Adult Bible Study
- 6:15 pm Children's Choir Rehearsal
- 7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal