



# The Wimberley Way

Our mission is to invite, make and nurture disciples for Jesus Christ through a community of love and encouragement.



Laura Merrill, Pastor  
(512) 847-3109

Rip Collins, Associate Pastor  
[www.wimberleyumc.org](http://www.wimberleyumc.org)

## Pastor's Note

December 2009

As I write this, it is still November, not even Thanksgiving yet. But Christmas preparations are ramping up all around me, and I'm finding myself paying at least a little bit of attention. I've been thinking, maybe I can start earlier this year on my own preparations (and by this I mean at home), decorating and cooking and planning our schedule. Then there's the shopping—my kids are fast at work making Christmas lists, making them and adding to them.

At the same time, I read in the *United Methodist Interpreter*, a monthly magazine, about churches and families that are choosing an alternative road for the season. Instead of the big whirlwind of energy and money that usually passes for Advent and Christmas, these folks are forgoing gift-giving among themselves, raising money for others, focusing on traditions that strengthen relationships instead of wearing themselves out.

One such congregation is Ginghamburg Church (UM) in Ohio, which has made an investment of over a million dollars in the people of Darfur, Sudan. They highlight this work especially during this season. The Rev. Mike Slaughter writes, "Christmas is the number one self-focused consumer day in America. Since 2004, folks at Ginghamburg have reminded each other that "Christmas is not *your* birthday... We are no longer about a feel-good, holly-jolly Santa Claus Jesus who leaves us isolated from the needs of the world—needs about which the church has been compliant for far too long."

There is no question that this message can feel Scrooge-y at first, mainly because it disrupts what is comfortable, familiar and pleasant for us. It asks something of us, a sacrifice on behalf of others, and in fact a re-orientation of our lives as no longer our own. But as Scrooge himself found, it truly is in giving ourselves away that we find what finally will fill us up. I don't know if this is what folks mean when they talk about "putting Christ back in Christmas," but it sure seems like a good definition to me.

Saving the lives of others and our own at the same time—some of our Christmas traditions contribute to this end, and some do not. I encourage you to make a space where you can look at how you will spend your time and your money this month. Our Advent study, *Simply Wait*, will help open that kind of space, or you may want to have a conversation with your family—how can you give yourself away this season? The siren song of our recovering economy will try to pull us off course; the lights and packages will promise fullness of heart. But we have the example of the One whose birth we actually are celebrating, to show us the way home.

See you in worship.

Grace and peace,  
Laura

# The Gourds at Susanna's Kitchen

## December 17

Cosmic country rockers The Gourds capture their live energy on their 2009 release, *Haymaker!*

Continuing the Gourds round trip through the outer reaches of the roots music universe and back again, *Haymaker!* takes the best of the band's classic eccentricities and melds it with the more linear narratives coined on last year's critically acclaimed *Noble Creatures*.



The attention garnered by Kevin "Shinyribs" Russel's classic ballads "Promenade" and "Steeple Full of Swallows" from *Noble Creatures* is indicative of the more straight ahead leanings exhibited on *Haymaker!* Here vintage Gourds boogie twang ("Country Gal") stands along side Jimmy Smith's tunes quintessential Texas character studies ("Thurman," "Bridgett"). Where normally Jimmy's famous non sequiturs and dense reference-heavy lyrics are a Gourds mainstay on *Haymaker!*, the second half of the Gourds psychic songwriting apparatus opted for a more direct approach. Says Smith, "If I frame a song in history, or use real names instead of pronouns, my content might be less cryptic to the listener. So it's win win..."

The Gourds continue to be: Jimmy Smith, Kevin 'Shinyribs' Russell, Keith Langford, Max Johnston, Claude Bernard. Want to listen? [www.thegourds.com](http://www.thegourds.com)

*Susanna's Kitchen is a monthly coffeehouse hosted by the Wimberley United Methodist Church (TYPICALLY) on the third Thursday of the month in the WUMC fellowship hall and is open to the public. Tickets are available at the door, \$15 for adults, \$5 for children, childcare is available from 7:00 to 9:00pm. Pie from Wimberley Pie Company, organic coffee from Hill Country Natural Foods, and hot tamales are always on site! Doors open at 7:00 pm, with music starting at 7:30. This is a smoke-free, alcohol-free venue.*

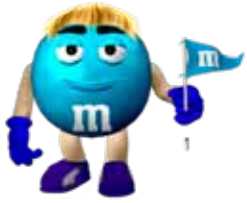
### FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR OCTOBER 2009



	MONTH		YEAR TO DATE	
	INCOME	OPERATING EXPENSES	INCOME	OPERATING EXPENSES
ACTUAL	\$36,734	\$37,972	\$404,855	\$379,917
BUDGET	\$35,737	\$38,128	\$357,034	\$381,280
Pos (Neg)	\$997	\$156	\$47,821	\$1,363

Note: YTD expenses include \$23,200 for parking lot lighting, and YTD income includes a gain on sale of real estate of \$29,395.

	MONTH	YTD	TOTAL
SANCTUARY PLEDGES SINCE INCEPTION	\$9,055	\$16,195	\$974,002



# Children's Ministries

## program spotlight: kidspraise



Each month, I'm highlighting a specific children's ministry program at WUMC. This month, I'd like to tell you about Kidspraise. **Kidspraise** is a children's choir targeting 3 year olds through 5<sup>th</sup> graders. All children are welcome to meet on Wednesdays from 6:00 – 6:30 PM following the all-church family meal. During Kidspraise, children prepare musical selections for singing and hand bells. Kidspraise performs from time to time during the worship services and at community events. They also participate in several musical productions annually as well. So far this school year, Kidspraise has worked on their drama skills, participated in a hoedown, "sang" in sign language, and practiced singing traditional Christmas hymns. Kidspraise will present an Advent program on Sunday, December 13, at both services.

During this busy season, I invite you to take a break from the hectic pace. Play tag with your children. Make Christmas cookies. Take time to laugh and love. Work to keep Christ present in your daily life. Here are four simple ways to keep Christ the central to the Christmas season:

1. Set aside a special time to read the Christmas story in Luke 1:5-56 through 2:1-20
2. Plan a project of good will this Christmas
3. Give a surprise gift of service to each member of your family
4. Give God one very special gift just from you to him - Let this gift be something personal that no one else needs to know about, and let it be a sacrifice. David said in 2 Samuel 24 that he would not offer a sacrifice to God that cost him nothing.

In Christ,  
Barbara Rutherford  
Interim Children's Ministries

The annual Christmas luncheon of Ruth Circle will be held at the Black Forest Restaurant Thursday, December 3. We will convene in the parking lot of the restaurant at the junction at 11:15. For more details contact Coleen Walker 847-2406. All ladies are invited.

Ruth Circle will be a part of the ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS at the church starting Sunday, November 29. Be sure and stop by!



## Wednesday Evening Fellowship Meals

December 2, 2009: Homemade Soup (several different types), Breads/  
Crackers and Dessert

December 9, 2009: Sausage Wraps, Potato Salad, Baked Beans  
and Dessert

December 16, 2009: Pizza, Salads and Bread

Each Wednesday evening at 5:30- 6:30pm a wonderful meal is prepared to share with the congregation in the fellowship hall. The youth and childrens groups meet on this evening, so for all the working parents, this is a true act of evangelism. All children and youth leave the fellowship hall at 6:00pm for their programming. All other committees, classes and choir members that come up to the church, are encouraged, and very welcome to join. A donation is requested to help cover the grocery expenses.

# Church & Society

If you haven't purchased your church t-shirt, please do so sooner rather than later so that we can close this project out. There are sizes for men, women and children. They are useful and attractive for church events or a casual day around town.

The Alternative Giving Fair has yet to happen as this is being written. The writer chooses to believe that it was the usual big success that it usually is. Thanks to all for your support for persons all over the world.

Hays County is continuing free residential tire disposal at the Driftwood and Wimberley recycling centers. The \$2 per tire fee is waived till further notice. Tires must be 20" or under in rim diameter and there is currently no limit to the number a resident can dispose of at the centers. The facility does not accept solid or foam-filled tires. The Wimberley recycle center is located at 1691 Carney Lane and the Driftwood recycle center is located at CR162 (Darden Hill Rd.).

Jessie Graham, C&S Chair

## Prayer Ministries

This year we have been praying and reflecting on The Lord's Prayer ("praying like Jesus" as author James Mulholland refers to it). In this final month of the year, let us pray together simply "AMEN". In PRAYING LIKE JESUS, Mulholland observes that "in most churches, this word has degenerated into a signal that the prayer is over and we can all lift out heads. In the Jewish tradition, it was much more meaningful. It literally meant, "So be it." It was the worshipers' commitment to do what they had prayed. It was a vow.

With that understanding of AMEN we are saying that we will do what we have prayed, to fulfill the vow we made as we prayed. And so, with this prayer in our hearts and often on our lips, we commit ourselves to lives with which we work "to establish God's kingdom and do His will, to give and forgive, to resist evil now and in the years ahead." As we pray this prayer we unite our will to God's.



Author David Timms' offers the observation that Jesus has been referred to as "the great Amen" and "all the promises of God find their Yes in Christ." As this year ends, let us once more take time to pray The Lord's Prayer, aware of God with us even as we pray, and make yet again the commitment of the AMEN as we move into the year ahead.

Every life that desires to be strong must have its "Most Holy Place" into which only God enters.

Hush my heart into a stillness, Lord, before I speak to Thee,  
Let it beat softly in Thy presence, Lord, and bring a peace to me;  
Let quiet and calm and stillness, Lord, prepare me now for Thee,  
That as I seek Thy audience, Lord, my heart at rest may be.

Vandi Moore

# Barnabas Connection

A Wimberley UMC blessing...

A young woman came to the church seeking our help and was rather desperate and emotional. I took her up to my office so we could speak privately. Her face was bruised and marked up. As a victim of domestic violence the night before, she had left her home and spent the night in her car in one of the Wimberley neighborhoods. She went to a different local church first and then they sent her to us since we have the Barnabas Connection and are administering the Wimberley Ministerial Alliance fund.

It was clear she would not return to the home, so I suggested the Hays County Women's shelter in San Marcos. I am not sure what this says, but the (thankfully) few times I have encountered this in my Barnabas work and suggested the local women's shelter, the reaction has always been one of shock. It is as if a mirror that they are not prepared to look in has been placed in front of them. This client also was not prepared to go to the shelter mentally or physically.

I was then at a loss of what to suggest and asked about any alternative friend or family support. Thankfully she had someone out of the area that was willing to help and so the Operation Good Shepherd fund of the Wimberley Ministerial Alliance paid for her gas to leave Wimberley and seek help.

In my time spent with her I asked if she had eaten today. She had not, so while she was completing some paperwork I needed for Operation Good Shepherd I went to the WUMC kitchen to see what I could gather. Matilda Long, MDO director was busily preparing a special lunch for the MDO staff. I shared with her my need and she pitched in without hesitation, making me 2 sausage wraps from her lunch preparations, grabbing some oranges and cookies from MDO snacks, chips left over from Wednesday night meals... I grabbed some bottled water from the Susanna's Kitchen coffeehouse stock and we gathered it all up to send with her for the drive away from Wimberley.

The blessing of having staff so willing to support each other's programs is beyond measure.

The blessing of having this church here in Wimberley with staff able and willing to respond is beyond measure.

The blessing of having a fund to help meet local basic needs is beyond measure.

We were able to feel helpful that day and answer the call of Christ. This blessing was possible because of the many faithful stewards of this church and its work. Your involvement and support of WUMC will make the difference in the life of someone you may never see, now and in the future.

Vicki McCuiston, Program Director

*The Barnabas Connection is a non-denominational community outreach of the Wimberley United Methodist church, provided primarily through a telephone referral service. Volunteers provide information and assistance on a variety of needs: utility bills, rent, medical needs, counseling, addiction, etc. Resources are available for much of Hays County. 847-1664*

## October Attendance

Members 420

Average Sunday School 133

Average Worship Service 239



## 2009 Advent/Christmas Calendar

1-Dec David Glenn  
 1-Dec Perry Raybuck  
 1-Dec Tim Nicholson  
 1-Dec Kaitlyn Chambers  
 2-Dec Pat Muehl  
 2-Dec Ethan Cruz  
 5-Dec Marjorie DeHart  
 5-Dec Jenny Monahan  
 6-Dec Ellen Allen  
 7-Dec Ben Shaw  
 7-Dec Lee Gibson  
 8-Dec Tom Ricks  
 8-Dec Will Murphy  
 9-Dec Pat Bender  
 9-Dec Kay Westbrook  
 10-Dec Pat Bishop  
 10-Dec Jean Denney  
 11-Dec Cathy Soden  
 11-Dec Shawn Spillar  
 11-Dec Jennie Lowry  
 12-Dec Cheryl Maguire  
 13-Dec Winston Hudson  
 13-Dec Dinah Burgin  
 13-Dec Mary Jane Tatum  
 13-Dec Sara Robbins  
 14-Dec Richard Tate  
 14-Dec Judy Ruud  
 14-Dec Pam Collins  
 14-Dec Layla Maguire  
 14-Dec Ada Wren  
 16-Dec Bob Kuder  
 16-Dec Paula Conley  
 18-Dec Gayla McNeil  
 18-Dec Abby Funderburk  
 19-Dec Dorothy Schmidt  
 19-Dec Christy Degenhart  
 20-Dec J.J. Schwettmann  
 21-Dec Patrick Mehaffey  
 24-Dec Mary Guy Enno  
 24-Dec Parker Burgin  
 24-Dec Hunter Sosby  
 25-Dec Bill Robinson  
 28-Dec Paula King  
 28-Dec John King  
 29-Dec Bill Eakin  
 29-Dec Jessie Graham  
 29-Dec Cole Spillar  
 30-Dec Martha Vesper  
 30-Dec Hannah Volk  
 31-Dec Gloria Duke

<b>Sunday, Nov 29</b>	8:30 & 11:00am 9:45am	First Sunday of Advent Simply Wait Study Alternative Giving Fair
<b>Tuesday, Dec 1</b>	9:30am & 7:00pm	Simply Wait Study
<b>Wednesday, Dec 2</b>	6:30pm	Advent Worship Service
<b>Sunday, Dec 6</b>	8:30 & 11:00am 9:45am 5:00pm	Second Sunday of Advent Simply Wait Study "Spaghetti in Your Lap" UMYF Fundraiser for Brown Santa
<b>Tuesday, Dec 8</b>	9:30am & 7:00pm	Simply Wait Study
<b>Wednesday, Dec 9</b>	6:30pm	Advent Service of Light & Prayer
<b>Sunday, Dec 13</b>	8:30 & 11:00am 9:45am	Third Sunday of Advent Kidspraise Choir Christmas Program Simply Wait Study
<b>Tuesday, Dec 15</b>	9:30am & 7:00pm 6:00-9:00pm	Simply Wait Study Mothers Day Out Christmas Program
<b>Wednesday, Dec 16</b>	6:30pm	"The Longest Night" Service for those struggling with grief and loss over the holidays
<b>Thursday, Dec 17</b>	7:30pm	Susanna's Kitchen presents <b>The Gourds</b>
<b>Friday, Dec 18</b>	10:00pm-6:00am	Austin District Youth Fa-la-la-Lockin
<b>Sunday, Dec 20</b>	8:30 & 11:00am 9:45am 4:00pm	Fourth Sunday of Advent Adult Choirs Christmas Cantata Simply Wait Study Church-wide Christmas Caroling & Supper
<b>Tuesday, Dec 22</b>	9:30am & 7:00pm	Simply Wait Study
<b>Thursday, Dec 24</b>	5:30pm 10:00pm	Family Service of Carols & Candlelight Service of Holy Communion & Candlelight

# WUMC Giving Tree

The Barnabas Connection is sponsoring the WUMC Giving Tree to support 5 local families in need. Please look for the Giving Tree in the Narthex beginning November 29 at the Alternative Giving Fair through December 14.

Tags will be hung on the tree identifying specific needs for children and families (toys, clothing, assorted gift cards for shoes, electricity, etc). Take a tag, purchase the gift and return it unwrapped with the tag attached, to the tree by Sunday, December 14. The gifts will be distributed the following week.

If you have any questions, please contact Vicki McCuistion, Barnabas Connection program director at 847-3109 or [barnabas@wimberleyumc.org](mailto:barnabas@wimberleyumc.org).

If you know of additional families in need please refer them to a Barnabas volunteer at 847-1664 for information and registration with the Gold Santa program.

Thank you for your support of sharing a wonderful Christmas with our neighbors!

## Youth Holiday Happenings

The youth sponsored “Share Your Blessings” food drive benefiting Crisis Bread Basket was a huge success thanks to the generosity of our church members and the shoppers at Brookshire Brothers. We had cash donations of \$300 and 18 boxes of food. We thank everyone for their continued support of the youth’s outreach programs.

Another way to support the youth is to purchase luminarias in honor or in memory of a loved one. We will be selling these at the Alternative Giving Fair and throughout the month of December. This will also be your last chance to purchase a beautiful inspirational calendar. All proceeds help send the youth on their summer mission trips!

On Sunday December 6, WUMC Youth are joining together with youth from 2 other churches and the Young Life group from WHS to support the Brown Santa program run by Hays County Sheriff’s Department. From 5-7 we will be serving “Spaghetti in your Lap” at the Emily Ann Theatre Trail of Lights. Please bring an unwrapped toy for a free plate of spaghetti. Cash donations are also accepted.

While “Spaghetti in your Lap” is one reason to visit the Trail of Lights, another reason is to see the new WUMC light display. Our old nativity scene needed to be retired so a team of creative forces led by Vicki McCuistion and Laura Tanner developed a new theme. Creator extraordinaire Rich Cantor designed and implemented the display with the youth and parents assisting with tree lighting. To find the display you will need to climb almost to the top of the hill by the Veteran’s Memorial and our display will be on your left.

The youth wish everyone a joyous Advent season.