



“Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it...” (Jer. 6:16). Western Hills has come to the crossroads. We are facing a rapidly changing mission field, and we must change to reach it. Western Hills cannot be the church it was even five or ten years ago if it is going to reach El Paso with Christ’s good news in 2017 and beyond. Paradoxically, I believe the best way forward is for us to walk in “the ancient paths.”

We have done good ministry in 2016. We have maintained our strong emphases on discipleship, worship, and serving the community. We would be foolish and unfaithful to deemphasize any of these strengths. However, I am calling us to begin a process of alignment, to bring our ministries into the way of the early church, what John Wesley called “primitive Christianity.” The emphasis

of the first Christians was not church programs, growth strategies, or even evangelism and social reform. Instead, the early church emphasized personal spiritual formation and Christian community formation.

To be sure, various programs, evangelism, worship, and social outreach and transformation are essential characteristics of a healthy Christian church. But they are the fruit of a broad and deep commitment to formation in the likeness and character of Christ. I am convinced that, for us to be who God is calling us to be in 2017 and beyond, we must *Live the Story*. This is what I’m offering as our vision through 2017. *Living the Story* consists of three parts:

Learning the Story. I am calling for a renewed commitment for each of us—young and old—to devote ourselves to the study of Scripture. Every one of us should be learning the stories of the Bible, memorizing scriptures, participating in practices like *lectio divina*, or finding whatever way is appropriate for us to learn the great story of God’s revelation and redemption.

Practicing the Story. I am calling for a renewed commitment to training for godliness through practices like regular fasting, prayer, silence and solitude, rest and retreat, and so on. These are not practices for a few spiritual over-achievers, but should be a regular part of the life of any disciple of Jesus Christ.

Sharing the Story. I am calling for a renewed commitment to Christian community. God’s vision for the world is *shalom*, peace and flourishing among God, all people, and creation. Each and all of us should be committed to relationships of sacrificial love and service in family life and friendships, small group Christian accountability, the larger community, and creation care. As John Wesley said, there is no holiness apart from social holiness.

By learning the story, practicing the story, and sharing the story, we will live the story. As we change our ways of *being* the church, we will have to change our ways of *doing* church. But I firmly believe, if we will commit ourselves to God’s ancient path, we will find ourselves walking together into God’s future.

Grace and Peace, Pastor Robert

Reaching... Nurturing... Transforming...

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF WESTERN HILLS UMC — EL PASO, TEXAS

OUR FAITHFULNESS IN MINISTRY

WITH OUR PRAYERS

SYMPATHY

Mitzi Underwood & Family, in the loss of her mother
 Debbie Hand & Family, in the loss of her father
 Steve & Margaret Haddad, in the loss of their daughter, Mary and daughter-in-law, Becca

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYERS

Jerry Swaney, health concerns
 Marie Rocheleau, health concerns

THE WORLD

People in the city of Juarez

FAMILY & FRIENDS

Dee Yearwood Cunningham, health concerns
 Stacy, health concerns
 Dare Stevens, health concerns
 Hector Hernandez, health concerns
 Anabel Andrade
 Iris and husband, health concerns

Jackie Burkner, health concerns
 Logan Justin Graham, health concerns
 Karl Swenson, health concerns
 Melissa Cheeseman, health concerns

FAMILY & FRIENDS with cancer

Yoli Herlihy
 Kim Hamilton
 Marianna Derr
 Anne
 Susana
 Sandy
 Bob Snead
 Gavin Moon
 Sylvia Villagrana
 Fred Haberlein
 Thomas Haddad
 Dena Hathaway
 Denese Gentry
 Robert Askelson
 Jill Askelson
 Rick
 Meredith Galyean
 Barbara Barnhill

**Indicates a new prayer request this week.*

WITH OUR PRESENCE

December 4 , 2016

Worship223
 Sunday School100
 The Ridge105
 Sidewalk SS..... n/a

December 11, 2016

Worship242
 Sunday School86
 The Ridge107
 Sidewalk SS.....64

December 18, 2016

Worship 219
 Sunday School..... 77
 The Ridge..... 96
 Sidewalk SS..... 320

December 25 , 2016

Worship (WH & Ridge) 113

January 1, 2017

Worship (WH & Ridge) 138

WITH OUR GIFTS

Revenue MTD November 2016: \$61,483.73
 Expenses MTD November 2016: \$61,149.40

Revenue YTD November 2016: \$637,926.69
 Expenses YTD November 2016: \$706,837.62

Revenue Budget YTD November 2016: \$786,025.00
 Expense Budget YTD November 2016: \$753,118.17



NEED PRAYER?

If you have a prayer request or would like to be a part of our Prayer Chain, email ZDMFHM@aol.com or call 915.581.3051.

Our mission is to reach out with the love of God to those beyond our church, to nurture our church body in the Christian faith and life, helping all to be transformed participants in the mission of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

ELECTRONIC GIVING

Scan the QR code to be taken to our electronic giving website.



Young El Paso Singers
presents

**"I HEAR AMERICA
SINGING...AS ONE NATION"**

**Friday, January 13
7:00PM
Western Hills UMC
Admission is Free**

Pianist: Ruben Gutierrez
Director: Dr. Cindy Jay
Information: 915-227-6002

IN PLACE OF POINSETTIAS
SOBREMESA FOOD TRUCK MINISTRY



Thanks to
all your
contributions,
\$3,110 was given
towards the
WHUMC Food
Truck Ministry.


**altar
flowers**



Purchase altar flowers in honor
or in memory of loved ones or to
celebrate a special day. Sign up
on the chart in the Narthex.

most 2017 dates are open

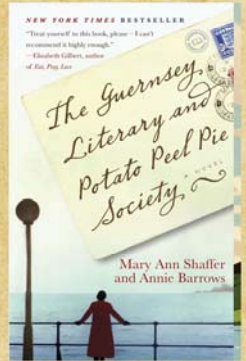
FAITH, FICTION, & FELLOWSHIP
Page Turners



January 12
7pm - 8:30pm
SFLC Lobby

The Guernsey Literary
and Potato Peel Pie Society
Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows

Even if you don't finish the book, join us
for lively discussion & bring a friend.
Refreshments Provided



Dearest Family, Friends and Colleagues,

We find that words are woefully inadequate to express our gratitude for your gracious and generous expressions of sympathy and love. Your kind acts have carried us through this very dark time. Our table is laden with delicious and sustaining food; our home is scented with the fragrance of beautiful flowers and plants; we benefited from dry-cleaning, grocery and airport runs; we were embraced by your warm hugs and consoled by phone calls from afar; and we were gratified by your fond remembrances of our precious Mary and her beloved Becca. Many of you participated in their memorial service, which left us filled with hope and strength to face the days to come. We thank you again and covet your continued prayers.

Fondly,
Steve and Margaret Haddad



NEWS FROM THE Children's + Ministry

CLEAR YOUR SCHEDULES

We're bringing in the New Year with
MOM'S NIGHT OUT!

Thursday, January 12

6:30 pm

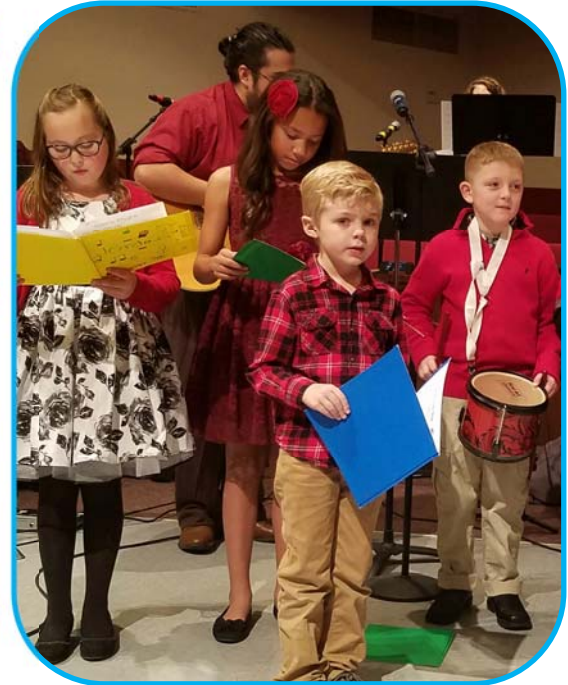
Angry Owl, 4799 N.Mesa St.

No need to RSVP, just show up and get ready for some fun and fellowship! Hope to see you there.

If you have any questions please contact Colleen McGuire at 512-627-3291.



JC Crew did a beautiful job singing for the Christmas Eve service. We want to thank David for all his hard work with the children. He has and continues to be a blessing in Children's Ministry.



LOVE



GROW



SERVE

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES MISSION STATEMENT
**TO LOVE THE LORD OUR GOD WITH ALL
OUR HEART, WITH ALL OUR SOUL,
WITH ALL OUR STRENGTH,
AND WITH ALL OUR MIND.**

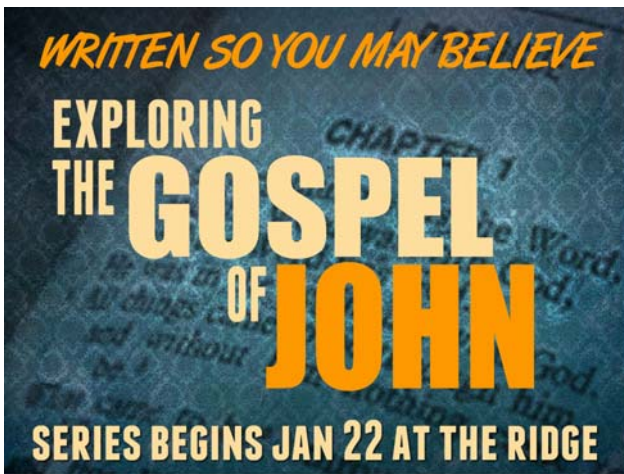
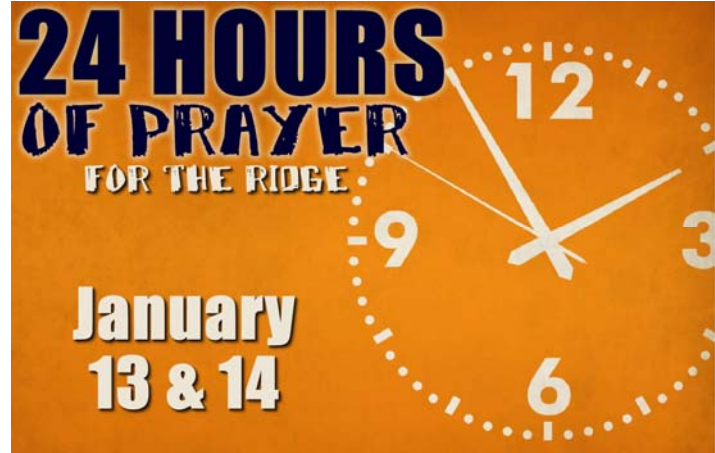
VIEWS FROM THE RIDGE

There are still a few times left in the 24 Hours of Prayer for the Ridge vigil.

January 13 & 14

6:00PM—6:00PM

If you would like to sign up for a time, contact Pastor Josh Kouri. 915-228-8864.



Join us for *Written So That You May Believe: Exploring the Gospel of John*

We'll spend 6 weeks in the fourth Gospel learning about this unique and captivating window into the life of Jesus. In preparation for the series, Pastor Josh is challenging the congregation to read the entire Gospel of John by January 22.



Thanks to all who came and rang bells for Salvation Army last month at the Wal-Mart Market on Doniphan and Redd. We had a great time raising money for the important work of the Salvation Army. We can't wait till next year!



Fun and family on the ice at the El Paso Events Center, December 18.





When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. Isaiah 43:2a

BAYOU BLESSINGS

March 11-18, 2017

Spring Break Mission Trip

TRIP COST
\$825/person*

*Cost Breakdown:

- \$550 airfare/transportation
- \$25 per day housing and team meals (7 days = \$175)
- \$100 "fun day"

Deposit of \$400
Due by January 15th
deposit is non-refundable

Payment of \$200
Due by February 1

Payment of \$225
(balance)
Due by February 28

** There will be opportunities for you to participate in fundraising activities in January and February.*

Proceeds will be divided among those who participate in the activity.

LODGING:

Lodging will be at one of the host churches in the Baton Rouge/Denham Springs/Gonzalez area. Each host church has showers and sleeping space, usually in a fellowship hall or Sunday School classroom. Most lodging is located less than 30 minutes from the worksite.

We ask that you bring your own bedding, toiletries, and towels. Most people prefer to bring an air mattress though cots may be available at some sites.

BUILDING MATERIALS:

All building materials will be provided at the job site. The Missions Ministry Team will cover the suggested donation for materials (\$100 per adult and \$50 per youth) and insurance (\$35 per individual) for the team.

DRIVING TEAMS:

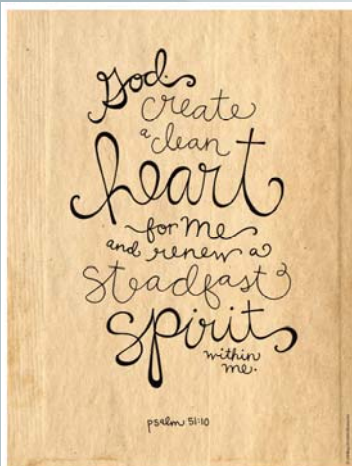
We plan to take two 15 passenger vans from El Paso and will need 2 or 3 adults willing to be drivers. Driving teams would leave Friday, Mar. 10 and arrive home Sunday, Mar. 19. We will be collecting/bringing a variety of tools, and able to carry extra luggage.

TRAININGS/MEETINGS:

There will be a Volunteers In Mission Training held at Western Hills UMC on Sunday Jan. 29 from 2:00-4:30 pm in SFLC Meeting Room. To register for this training call 915-584-2133 by Jan. 15. All leaders are required to attend the training. There will be an additional team meeting to complete all paperwork in late February.

QUESTIONS/SIGN UP

Contact Pastor Amy at 584-2133.



**524 Thunderbird Dr.
El Paso, TX 79912**

Office: (915) 584-2133
Fax: (915) 833-2965
WH Academy: (915) 584-6642

WESTERN HILLS UMC STAFF

Ministers
All Members

Rev. Robert Pelfrey
Senior Pastor

Rev. Amy Mercer
Mission & Discipleship

Rev. Josh Kouri
The Ridge

Margaret Haddad
Director of Music
Ministries

David Pena
Director of Praise
& Worship

Mitzi Underwood
Director of Youth
Ministries

Colleen McGuire
Director of Children's
Ministries

Laurie McBride
Business/Facilities
Manager

Suzy Snow
Administrative
Assistant

Mindy Archey
Publications/
Communications

Patricia Aguirre
WH Academy