



Bookwalter United Methodist Church

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January 2024

Reverend Stephen K. Doyal, Pastor

Bailey Hueser, Choir Director
Todd Spangler, Pianist

Edie Jo Hall, Children's Director
Taylor Stephens, Youth Director

*Sharing God's love with our neighbors,
inviting them to share in the joy of Jesus Christ.*

ARTICLE

Looking back before looking ahead in 2024, the following was my report for the 2023 Charge Conference:

As you look back over the past year: What were the expressions of God's grace and love within your local church through worship and ministry?

We started the year with a theme dinner on New Year's Day called "Peas On Earth" with black eyed peas as the main staple. We have Coffee House Church on the fifth Sunday of each month. We have guest speakers for those times of worship in the Fellowship Hall.

In early February, we had a Brain-storming session to come up with ideas for ministry / mission at Bookwalter. One such idea was to provide birthday supplies and gifts to families in need. We received a grant to this end.

A highlight of the year was a unique outreach in April called "Bookwalter Cares" - an event designed to raise awareness about suicide and provide resources.

An extension of this is a Suicide Support Group that started meeting at Bookwalter in September for those who have lost a loved one who took their own life.

We hired Taylor Stephens as our new youth person, and she has worked out very well with our young people. She took 8 youth to Senior High Assembly in June and plans to take a group to Resurrection '24 in January for the first time in years.

We continued to serve Inskip Elementary by facilitating Pack-A-Backpack as school started. We now share the collection of school supplies with other organizations through Friends of Inskip.

We hosted a Trunk or Treat in October which was well attended by our community and we collected hundreds of food items for Thanksgiving boxes for Inskip families.

What were the challenges that you had to face?

We have still not fully recovered financially or attendance wise from the pandemic. There are hopeful signs of new people coming in, so we carry on.

Were there new and creative worship experiences formed?

One idea that emerged from our Brainstorming session was having a “Theme Team” involved in the weekly planning of worship. They add visual representations of whatever the sermon theme is for the week.

In what ways did worship look or feel different?

We have mounted two large screen TV’s in our sanctuary. We have been able to use them in a limited capacity thus far, but will be able to do more once they are fully connected to our system.

Who have you been able to reach that you had not before?

The “marketing” of the Bookwalter Cares event involved television interviews and other news outlets that I believe reached people we might not have otherwise.

How has the current division within the UMC changed the focus and direction of your local church? What does the future hold for your local church?

While the division and disaffiliations are a source of concern, our focus remains on serving the Inskip community in the best ways we can. We are also investigating the possibility of being a Lighthouse congregation that actively seeks to include those individuals displaced by churches that have left the denomination.

What are you most looking forward to doing in the upcoming year?

Hopefully moving beyond all the denominational strife and refocusing on ministry.

Steve

CHURCH COUNCIL

We will be meeting Monday, January 8th at 7:00 PM in the chapel and via Zoom.

BIBLE STUDY

The Adult Bible study resumes on January 10th at 6:30 PM. This will be 9 sessions on Fruits of the Spirit.

RESURRECTION ‘24

Be in prayer for our youth, our youth leader and the adult volunteer chaperones while they are at this special youth event the weekend of January 19-21.

LOOKING AHEAD

We are planning a second annual brain-storming session on Saturday, February 3 at 9:00 AM

CHRISTMAS PHOTOS

Here are some photos from our Christmas party and the International Festival before the Christmas Concert.

