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## About us

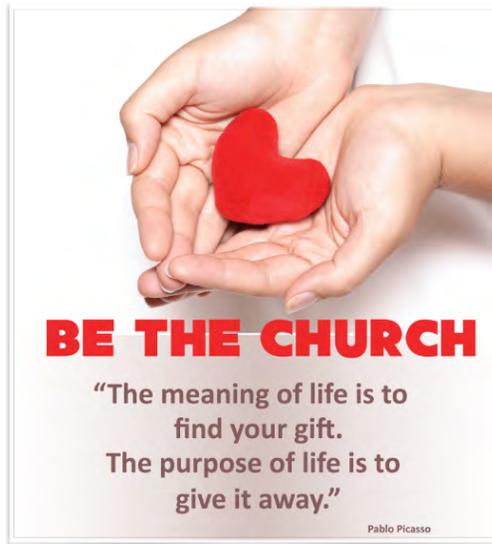
We are a community of believers committed to living out our vision – *to shine God's love into every life!* We are a vibrant and authentic church family, offering many opportunities for fellowship and service. We are a family of talented, creative and imperfect individuals who gather as the people of God, united by the Holy Spirit, living faithfully as disciples of Jesus Christ.

*FUMC-Denton News* is a regularly published newsletter created to inform, update and share relevant and thought-provoking content.

You can also read FUMC-News at <http://fumc-denton.com/fumc-denton-news/>

Connect with us on [Facebook](#) (First United Methodist Church Denton), in Instagram (@FumcDenton) and on [Twitter](#) (@FUMCDentonTX).

## BE the Church



"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away." These words did not come from the Bible but came from Pablo Picasso, one of the greatest and most influential artists of the 20th century. Although he was not a religious man, these words could easily have come from a Christian book and interpreted as using your talents to help others. And the Bible has much to say about finding your

gifts and giving them away:

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone." - 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." - 1 Peter 4:10-11

We believe that the church is the physical presence of Jesus Christ in the world and that we are called by God to be the hands and feet of Christ as we serve God's children and love one another. We believe everyone has talents and gifts. And we believe these gifts should be used for good. So, we should take action, we should serve. We should *BE the Church*.

But how can you *BE the church*?

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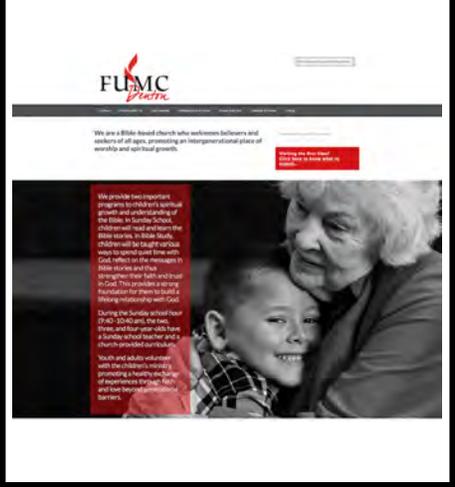
# Announcements



## Visit Our New Homepage!

New year, new homepage! Because we are such a dynamic church and have so much to say, we updated the homepage on our website. Easier to navigate, vibrant and inviting. Go check it out: [www.fumc-denton.com](http://www.fumc-denton.com).

We are also updating the content on many of the pages and need your help. If your ministry, program or group has any changes, we want to know about them. Help us keep our website current, for you and for the many visitors who come to our website daily. Send any corrections and updates to Martha Ware, [mware@fumc-denton.com](mailto:mware@fumc-denton.com).



## Letter from Editor

Dear members:

And 2017 has arrived. For some, there is a sigh of relief because 2016 seemed so rough. For others, there is a reason to celebrate the end of fantastic accomplishments and renew the hope for another great year. No matter how your 2016 went, the first of the year brings that strength, almost an unconscious sense of hope for most people. It feels like a magic wand touches everyone and tells them to just start fresh.

As part of "starting fresh," people feel compelled to come up with New Year's resolutions. From the most common ones such as losing weight, getting back to the gym, aiming for a more balanced life and going to church, to the most unimaginable ones like not speeding, drinking less or remembering to brush their teeth, people believe that the New Year should start with "a challenge."

So I decided to also make a New Year's resolution. The problem is that everything I think of is either in the silly or impossible category. Or so I believe. For example: I decided not to eat bread. Silly. I love bread, I really do. And I believe in balance, everything in moderation. So, unless I can't eat bread for a medical reason, I'll keep sneaking on my bread here and there. Another one: I will win the lottery. Impossible (or, if I really think I could, I'd better at least start to play).

After thinking and writing down a list of possible New Year's resolutions (and discarding all of them) just one seemed reasonable to me: "I will stay true to myself." Beautiful. And once I figure what that really means I can commit to it. So, the key now is to figure that out. Who am I and how do I stay true to who I am?

I am strong and weak, funny and boring, soft and tough. I am a loving wife, an overprotective mother and a dedicated professional. I love animals, especially dogs. I am a caring friend, who tries to be always there for whomever needs a shoulder or a good laugh. And I am a believer.

And as a believer, I accept that I can be vulnerable and imperfect. Praying and having faith is what makes me move forward.

Making God present in my life makes me feel true to myself. Praising and serving Him, helping someone in need or believing in His power make me stay true to myself. So, as my New Year's resolution goes, I decided to open my heart more to the signs that God gives me and even when I don't understand His purposes, follow my calling.

Happy New Year!

Have a great week.  
Martha Ware

**Continued from page 1**

Our ministries have evolved and we are offering our members new ways to serve. *BE the Church* is a way for you to participate in one or many church ministries. It is all about enhancing our church family experience and involvement.

David Stem, who volunteers as an usher on our 11:00 am service, believes that God is gracious and gives us the mission of serving in the way we feel called to. "God gives us a way; He is mindful of us as individuals; and He will lead us in what He wants us to do. We can be joyful in the fact He does that," he said.

Most of us have busy lives: we rush to work, pick up the children, run errands, take care of our elderly parents, help with homework, take children to ballet classes, to the doctor, go to the gym, etc. All of us have busy schedules. But Jesus tell us, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."-Matthew 11:28.

No matter how busy our lives seem, we should "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."- Matthew 6:33-34.

"I was part of the leadership team of the Single Adult Ministry several years ago and I can tell you that serving in this church has made me feel much closer to God. Serving others, being in touch with people through the missions of the church make you feel in touch with God," said David Moses, who currently serves communion and participates in the Men's Ministry every week.

Our children need to learn about God and about serving in his name. We should put things into perspective and understand that if we want our children to have a good Christian education, we should be the first to offer our help. If we believe that hunger should not have a place, we should serve at First Meal. If we believe the world could be a better place, we should take the first step. Use your talents and gifts to make a difference, no matter how big or small that might be.

Terry Brantley's service is exemplified by his favorite Bible verse which serves as his motto: "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" Matthew 25:45. "I try to help where I feel comfortable, using my skills and gifts, but the truth is it does not matter how you help, the important thing is to serve God through serving others," said Terry.

Like to teach? We can find you a class to lead. Like to play the piano? We can find you opportunities to play. Like to take pictures? We will hook you up with Communications. Love children? We always need Sunday School teachers for our children.

There are many opportunities to serve and make a difference in your home church.

To know about the available opportunities click on the form below or get a copy of the form from the church main office during the week.

Let's BE the Church!

**JAN 22** **ALL MORNING**  
**MILLER CENTER**

Use your gifts and talents to be the hands and feet of Christ in our world and to help "Shine God's Love into Every Life." Check the opportunities to serve and make a difference in our home church. Details at <http://fumc-denton.com/get-involved/church/>

## Annual Chili Cook-Off

January 22 FUMC-Denton youth will have their Annual Chili Cook-Off, in Monroe Building at 12:00 pm. It is a fun event, appropriate for all ages and open to the community. You can bring your favorite chili (beef, vegetarian or alternative ones) to share and compete for the prize for the group with the most entries. It is a fundraiser event and all the money raised will be used for youth camps and mission trips.

You, your family, group or class can bring:

- Beef chili
- Vegetarian chili
- Alternative (chili recipes that are not included in the other two categories)

A prize will be awarded for the class/group/family with the most chili entries.

Don't want to bring any chili? You can just eat, enjoy your time with friends and vote for your favorite chili with the money in your pocket - just place your money inside the jars in front of each chili. A prize will be awarded to the chili that raises the most donations!

Last year, over 300 people attended the Youth Annual Chili Cook-off. Youth raised over \$2,100, including proceeds from a silent auction and the chili sales.

The youth got to keep the golden ladle, having the most entries of chili, with New Horizons Sunday Class coming in second place. Overall, there were 48 entries in the chili contest, exceeding the event organizer's expectations. Who is going to win this year?



## Welcome New Members!



Amanda Michelle Hirsch and Angela Marie Thompson joined our church on December 4, 2016. They attend the 8:30 am service. Both are teachers and got curious about FUMC-Denton once driving by, so they stopped to get information. They love that we are an open and accepting church. They have two children: Owen and Ethan. Welcome to our church!

Steffanee and Mark Moyragh joined FUMC-Denton on December 4, 2016. Steffanee is a CPA and Mark a veterinarian. They have three children: Cole and Cate are in 9th grade and Marlee in in 7th grade. They attend the 9:45 am service. We are glad to have you here.



Sally Seitz Casassa and Phillip Casassa joined our church on December 11, 2016. They attend the 11:00 am service. Both are retired. They love the music, the pastors and the people at FUMC-Denton. Welcome to our church family!

Dave and Tanya Cheney attend the 11:00 am service and joined our church on December 18, 2016. Both are retired and love the many available programs and activities. Tanya loves the New Horizons Sunday School class.



## Silent Auction Items Needed



Our youth are seeking Silent Auction items for the annual Chili Cook-Off on January 22. Donations of gifts cards, local entertainment, direct sales products, gift baskets and handmade items are all greatly appreciated. Businesses will be recognized on the slide presentation and business cards can be located next to donated items as well. For details, contact Nancy Willis at [nwillis@gmail.com](mailto:nwillis@gmail.com).

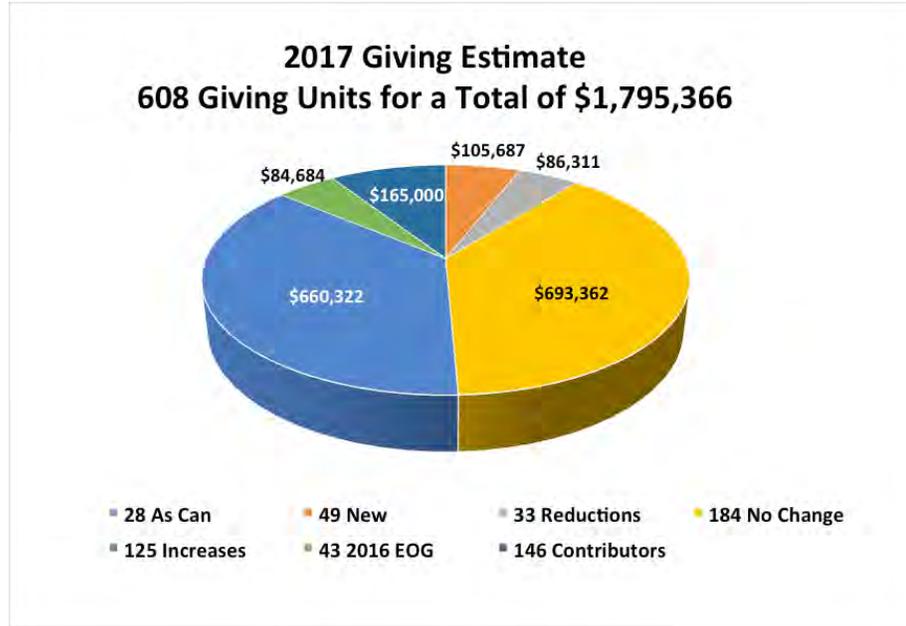


Make January 14 a day on, not a day off and join Serve Denton, Target, Fred Moore Day School, Denton Parks Foundation and Denton Parks and Rec for Denton's MLK Day of Service. Volunteers will meet at Denton Civic Center at 9 am, then return at noon for lunch and a recap of the day's accomplishments. To register, go to <http://conta.cc/2iyUHGW>

## Business Office Releases Giving Estimate for 2017

Based on the results of the Living God’s Dream stewardship emphasis, we have estimated our income from giving for 2017 to be just under \$1.8 million.

The chart to the right illustrates a breakdown of the results. This additional information may be helpful in understanding the chart. “As Can” are folks who completed an Estimate of Giving Card but without a dollar amount attached. Of the 49 “New” estimates received, 34 were previous contributors (folks who give but did not turn in an Estimate of Giving card in 2016). The “2016 EOG” category includes folks who did turn in a card in 2016, but not in 2017. Finally, the “Contributors” category are folks that gave in 2016 but did not turn in an Estimate for 2017.



This estimate is about \$40,000 more than actual giving for 2016.

## 2016 Financial Year in Review

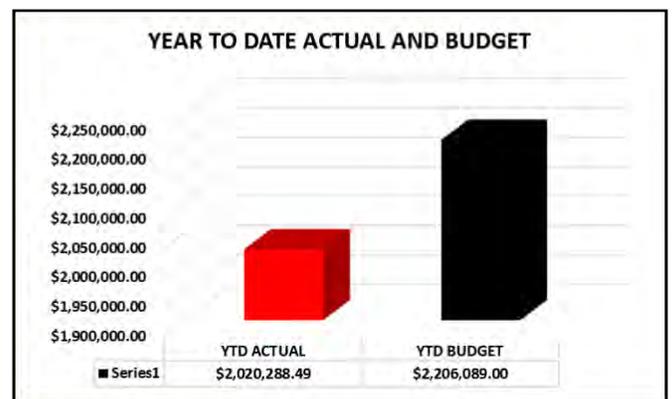
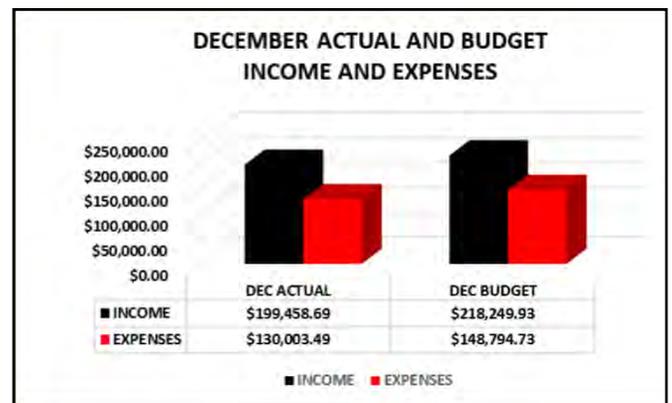
This past year was a challenging one from a financial perspective. During the budgeting process for 2016, the requests from the various ministry areas represented about a 10% increase of \$200,000. After discussions among the Trustees Budget Committee and Finance Committee, the Administrative Board voted to support that increase with an allocation of \$200,000 of the proceeds from an estate bequest. The Trustees then applied an additional \$200,000 toward debt retirement. This made it possible to balance the budget of expected revenues and expenses. The hope was that this increase could be sustained through increased giving from the following year’s stewardship campaign.

Over the course of the first several months of the year, income was less than budgeted but expenses also came in under budget. As the summer progressed, expenses began to outstrip income, which continued to be under budget. Each month, we applied whatever amount of estate funds were needed to balance the budget for that month.

The good news is that we finished the year with our budget in balance although income was over \$185,000 less than budgeted. In addition, we did not have to use the entire \$200,000 of the allotted funds so there is about \$60,000 available for this coming year.

The not-so-good news is that the initial budget requests for 2017 resulted in expenses \$250,000 more than our expected revenue. The goal of our Budget Committee and Finance Committee is to try to determine how best to sustain current budget requirements and then to consider additional requests, if possible. A final recommendation will be presented to the Administrative Board meeting on January 26.

Your prayers are appreciated as we seek God’s wisdom to be good stewards, to be faithful to our calling and to continue to reach out to our community to proclaim the gospel of Christ as we “Shine God’s Love into Every Life.”

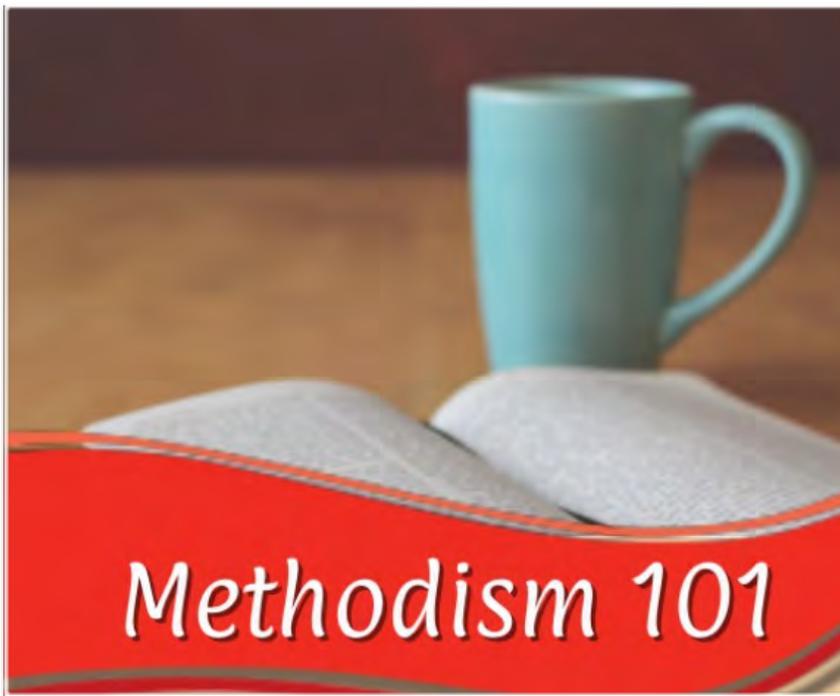


## Pastor's Note



Hi, I'm Pastor Jonathan. In worship this Sunday, we'll be continuing our series on joy, looking at obstacles we face keeping us from joy. Despite what we might think — no one has a wrinkle free life. All of us face events and circumstances — the twists and turns of life's journey — that make it hard to find joy in our lives. How can you be joyful when your employer says "You've been downsized" or a relationship ends? But as deep as these hurts are, there is a God whose grace and peace runs even deeper. Even in the midst of difficult circumstances, we can find purpose and promise and peace and perspective and the healing, growing presence of God even in trial and wrinkle. Join us this Sunday in worship as we learn how to face the obstacles that stand in the way of our finding true joy in life with God. We'll see you in worship!

## Methodism 101



Attention members, prospective members, visitors and anyone who wants to know more about United Methodist beliefs, what it means to be a connectional church, mission outreach in our congregation and how to be involved in ways that fit your gifts and graces. Methodism 101 will take place on January 15, 22, 29 and February 5 from 9:45 to 10:45 am in room 108. Here is what former participants are saying:

"Methodism 101 was very informative and made me feel at home at the church and that I was a part of something greater and good." – Landon Ellison

"Methodism 101 is very informative and well organized. The presentation is set in such a manner that it brings the facts, the myths, and the

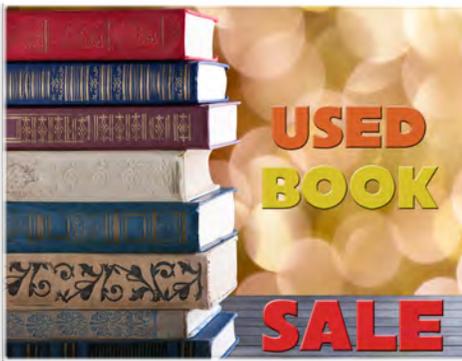
inspirations of United Methodism in a way that is understandable to all. As a new Methodist it is really a "must do." As a seasoned United Methodist it is an outstanding refresher course to inspire you once again on why you became a Methodist. I strongly recommend Methodism 101." – Linda Lawrence

**Announcements**



**2017 Children's Choir Camp**  
 First United Methodist Church of Denton

Save the date: 2017 Choir Camp will start on July 31. Mark Burrows, Director of Children's Ministries at First UMC Fort Worth will be our clinician.



FUMC-Denton Library will hold a used book sale this spring and needs your donation of used books in good conditions. You can drop your donations off in the Library during regular Library hours. For Library hours go to <http://fumc-denton.com/get-involved/library/>

# EVENT ALERT!

There will be a special called meeting of the Administrative Board on Thursday evening, January 26, 2017, at 6:30 pm in the Searchers Classroom (Room 231, Second Floor, East Wing). The primary purpose of the meeting is to receive the recommendation from the Finance Committee for the 2017 Budget, have opportunity for discussion and call for a vote. All members and at-large members of the Administrative Board are encouraged to attend. Meetings of the Administrative Board are open to all church members.



We will have a Christian movie with content for any audience, in Spanish (with subtitles in English), coffee or chocolate and cookies. Of course, we will also have some delicious popcorn!

Are you enrolled in our Spanish classes? Do you simply want to practice your Spanish? It is a great opportunity for fellowship. Friday, January 20 at 7:00 pm. Free.

**Our church offices will be closed on January 16 in observance of Martin Luther King Day. Children's Day Out and FunStop will be open.**