

THIS IS OUR STORY



THIS IS OUR SONG





A WORD FROM PASTOR RAEGAN

We are the Body of Christ, called to mission and ministry in Montgomery, Texas and beyond. From mission work in faraway lands to Upward Basketball, from providing food for the hungry to children's ministry and weekly worship experiences, Montgomery United Methodist Church continues to be committed to the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We have stories to tell of how God is at work here. What follows in these pages are those stories of how God is at work at MUMC making it "A place where the love of Jesus is alive".

2023 Budget Areas

Worship **\$12,000**

Inspiring worship gives people of all ages opportunities to express their faith explore their God-gifted talents and offer those gifts back to God.

Discipleship **\$19,048**

The lifelong journey of discipleship to create a pathway for people of all ages to nurture faith and grow toward maturity in Christ, from birth through adulthood.

Outreach **\$4,000**

Whether down the street or across the ocean, we extend the hope and love of Christ to a world in need by offering our resources, presence, and services to the glory of God and for the sake of others.

Adminisitration **\$467,952**

Providing our congregation, pastors and program staff with the support they need to implement and carry out the mission of our church. This includes all the staff salaries.

Nurture **\$1,4075**

Partners with the congregation to lead, nurture and embody Christian discipleship helping people to grow in loving God and neighbor.

Facilities **\$217,000**

Supporting the mission of our church by providing space and amenities for our existing ministries and the growing needs in our congregation and community.



2023 Budget

Benevolences	\$21,424
Adult Education	\$1,048
Children's Ministry	\$8,000
Youth Ministry	\$10,000
Outreach	\$4,000
SPRC/Pastoral	\$2,000
Worship/Music Ministry	\$12,000
Total Ministry	\$37,048

Building and Asset Management	\$170,000
Utilities	\$47,000
Office Operations	\$40,000
Staff Salaries	\$404,528
Total Expenses	720,000

WORSHIP



Cantatas

Our choir performs two cantatas during the year, one on Good Friday and the other at Christmas. Both of these productions have months of planning, many rehearsals, and an orchestra from the community.

Sunday Worship

- "It's so meaningful to me."
- "I can feel the presence of God."
- "It touches my heart, even gives me goosebumps."

These are just a few of the ways Sunday morning worship here at MUMC has been described.

As our central event every week in the life of the church, worship plays a vital role in the life of the Montgomery United Methodist Church family. Our gifted and growing choir leads us, as very much a "singing church," in our hymns while also offering special music every week. These strong proclamations of faith along with the beautiful preludes and offerings help us prepare our hearts to receive God's Word.

The Word comes to us in many different ways in worship. The profound, and often quite funny, Children's Messages help our youngest worshippers see God in new and relatable ways. Our Lay Scripture Readers read the words of the Bible in our midst. Our wonderful pastors proclaim the message of Scripture to us. And then, we give all present the chance to respond to God's movement in their hearts to give their life to Christ or to join the church, which we are so grateful that so many have in this last year.



Worship is where we meet. Worship is where we connect. Worship is where we are reminded of who God is and how much he loves us. Worship at Montgomery United Methodist Church is truly a time and a moment where we embrace who we are as "A Place Where the Love of Jesus is Alive."

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

Good Words for Great Souls

From its earliest days, the Methodist movement has been about forming people into the likeness of Christ together as we seek to heed the Apostle Paul's call in 1 Corinthians 11:1 "be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." We do this in so many different ways. We study Scripture together. We pray together. We fellowship together. Here at MUMC, we have opportunities to do all these things. Whether through our Sunday School classes, seasonal Bible studies, or our women's, men's and mom's groups. Our Sunday School classes continue to support and encourage one another as they study together. Our Bible Study group continues to grow as it currently averages over 30 participants every Thursday. Our women's group, Morning Glories, continues to mold fellowship and service to our community together every month. Finally, our two newest groups, started this Fall, are establishing themselves through focused fellowship with an eye to the future. The formation happening in these groups remains a vital part of the ministry here at MUMC.



Sunday School and Small Groups

Lost and Found
SUNDAY AT 8:45 AM

Sojourners
SUNDAY AT 8:45 AM

Morning Glories
SECOND WEDNESDAY
AT 9:30 AM

Mom's Group
WEDNESDAY AT 5:00 PM

Men's Breakfast
THIRD WEDNESDAY
AT 7:30AM

Adult Bible Studies
SEASONALLY



Over the last year, the youth and children's programs have had the opportunity to provide experiences enriching the spiritual and social lives of all associated with MUMC. We have offered weekly events as well as camps and Bible school.

Montgomery youth Group (M.U.G.): This program is our weekly youth program. The basis is fellowship and ministry, all while having fun. One of the notable experiences we saw this year involved a student who grew up not believing in God and had no interest in church. After being invited to Mug by a fellow youth, this student flourished. This high school student not only decided to begin a relationship with God, but they have also expressed a desire to become a youth leader and regularly volunteer to help the younger MUMC students in their walk of faith.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Youth Camp: Youth camp is another summer program modeled as a retreat for our older kids. This year it was held at a camp near College Station, Texas. This 5-day event allowed the kids to socialize, share experiences, engage in outdoor activities, and worship. One of the experiences a camper told us of was the sense of contributing and communing. He helped make dinner (which was a thrill for him because he relishes responsibility!), seeing the actual results of his providing and nourishing others. It was an experience that put that evening's fellowship in a different light. It was an inspiration to him as to how he could truly make a positive difference in the world and essentially minister to others the message of help and charity.

Jesus At Montgomery (J.A.M.): This companion program to M.U.G. is for our younger children (K-5th grades). It provides a structured Bible lesson and activities for K-5th Grade. We had a very inspiring incident in J.A.M. this last year. A child came into the program as a new attendee. Over the course of the year, she decided she wished to make a personal commitment to the lord and was baptized on her birthday in front of all her friends and family.



Skills Camp -This year, we hosted our first-ever skills camp for our children's program. We had 22 students attend (Kindergarten - 5th Grade), many new to our church and program. During camp, they learned cooking, baking, volleyball, soccer, art, painting, and tie-dyeing skills. Pastor Nancy told us a story of an experience from the camp. One of the children involved in coloring asked her if Jesus would love the art he made. He then asked her to send the picture to Jesus so he could have it!

Vacation Bible School: This traditional program is held with kids in grades K-5 during summer. This year, we were thrilled to have 45 of our 52 children who attended from families not associated with MUMC, as brand-new attendees. Of these, several families have continued to attend with some of the moms as part of the new Wednesday night women's group. The popularity of this program appeals to both those families already part of the church and those considering or simply looking for a summer program for their children.

TOMORROW'S PROMISE



Tomorrow's Promise Preschool is an important ministry at MUMC. The preschool is in session each year from August to May. We impact approximately 65 families annually and more than 70 students. We are blessed to be able to offer jobs to 10 full time staff, two substitutes and a Director. Tomorrow's Promise Preschool is a self-supporting ministry. We are funded through tuition payments charged to families.

We are a vital ministry mainly because we are teaching children about unconditional love provided by Jesus. Our rooms are filled with devoted staff that cares for students.

We appreciate the continued support by the congregation, prayers are always welcome! Those prayers are felt during challenging days.

Our students know they are important to each of you when they see your smiling faces.

The value of our mission is to show children they matter, their voices are important, they are worthy of unconditional love and they contribute to daily life.



GRIEF SHARE

Grief Share is a lay-led, nondenominational, Christ-centered grief recovery ministry. It is led by Beverly Bauer. The group at MUMC currently meets on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 am to 12:00pm.



In February of 2022, my son died unexpectedly. His body was found buried in the snow in KS where he had fallen the night before. Approximately 2 weeks later I had to call an ambulance for my husband. I had been a caregiver for him for approximately 3 years; 3 1/2 weeks later, he passed away... I believe the Griefshare Program helps us to realize "Sometimes the best remedy for grief is finding some way to touch somebody else's life".

My name is Beverly Bauer, and I am a GriefShare facilitator at Montgomery United Methodist Church. GriefShare began in 1996, and today over 1 million people have found healing through GriefShare. It is a 13 week, lay-led, nondenominational, Christ-centered grief recovery ministry. Our group currently meets on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 to 12:00 in room 205. GriefShare offers help and encouragement after the death of a spouse, a child, a family member, or friend. Members of our church and the community are welcome to attend. The GriefShare program revolves around 3 key parts: a Video, a Group discussion, and a Personal workbook. Some of the topics covered are: Sadness & Loneliness, Fear & Anxiety, Anger, Regrets, Questions for God, Hope and Healing and many more. The cost of the workbook is \$5, if the person does not have \$5, we have a donation fund so everyone goes home with a workbook.

GriefShare declares that it functions like an "emergency room" meaning the group remains open to receive new members at any point during the 13-week cycle. Some may want to repeat GriefShare two or even three times. Members are not required to share or talk; they can just watch videos and listen to others who are sharing. We ask that GriefShare members maintain a vow of confidentiality.

When I listen to people talk about the benefits of GriefShare, I am encouraged by the joy that they have found here. These people have bonded by the second or third week and have become more like family. We pray before we begin each session and ask the Holy Spirit to join us. We can feel him in our hearts, and many have tears in their eyes. We talk about how much the Lord loves us and how he guides us and protects us.

Prayer Ministry

Philippians 4:6

Every week MUMC sends out a text asking for prayer requests. Those responses are compiled and sent to our prayer warriors and staff so that we might provide prayer and support for those who are in need. Anyone is welcome to reply. You can also submit prayer requests through our website or during worship on Sunday. We believe that there is power in prayer. Our amazing lay leader, Connie Hoisington, leads our prayer team. Here is her story about the

power of prayer: At 3:46 a.m. on Sunday, March 6th, 2022, a pounding on the door of my home woke us. One of my son's best friends had ridden his motorcycle from Kingwood to notify me that my son, Brandon Kyle Shane, had been shot while standing outside of the Buffalo Wild Wings restaurant with another of his close friends, Josh Armajo, who was shot trying to protect my son at 12:06 am. He informed me that no one could get any information of any kind from the hospital, and I needed to make contact. After much debate with many hospital associates on the phone declaring that I know full well HIPAA rights and regs, and describing several of the people standing right there, even though they were telling me they had no patient by that name, I was finally at 5:03 am put through to the attending physician who told me they had done all that they could and he had passed and of course how sorry he was. What could he say? I found no words myself and by then my husband had notified most of our family and they were at my house or on the way. The only thing I could do was walk away, I went outside and began to pray. I needed strength, peace, and comfort to face the next few days, weeks, and years and I knew that without God, I would not make it!!! I felt I had no strength left. We buried my mother in 2010, and then we buried my brother (from a surprise illness) in 2014, and then we buried my sister's only son in 2018, and now in 2022, we would bury my only child. I felt empty and exhausted, and the very first thought that came to my mind was, "Please don't let me become angry with God!"

My sister was very angry with God for a long time. My husband's boss and best friend lost his wife to a "freak" accident (a tire from an oncoming vehicle went through her windshield and killed her). He became very angry with God! I work in the medical field, and I pray with a lot of patients something I hear so much is, "How could God do this to me, or us, or them?" I did not want that to happen to me, and I certainly did not want that to happen to his children.

By 7 a.m. on that morning, the church was already in action. Calls were coming in, and food was being sent, and of course, following church services, David came over. I remember sitting aside and talking to family and some friends that were there already, I felt like this was going on in all of their lives and not really in mine, I think. Then, of course, Kyles's friends began calling and arriving and sending texts and Facebook lit up and well, like a robot, I just made it from one day to the next.

To say that the church rallied around me, and my family would be a major understatement. To say that I could feel all the prayers IMMEDIATELY would also be an understatement. I know God heard my cry. I felt a strength and a peace that to this day I have no words to describe. The funeral led by Pastor Nancy was amazing and the church was full of brothers and sisters from church that never even met my son, and they filled the parking lot and the narthex and the walkway and the cemetery. I felt love like I had never felt before and I still do to this day. When I do feel down, I put out a cry for prayer, and the response is, well...God is good all the time. All the time, God is good.

I know that I know I would not have made it through with the strength and mindset that I do and did if not for the prayers of the Church and God instantly filling me.



WHAT KNOTS

YARN AND JESUS



Members of What Knots meet every week to crochet or knit together.

In the early days of What Knots, we knitted and crocheted "red, white & blue" scarves and hats for Special Olympics which was sponsored and coordinated through Red Heart Yarns. Since then we have created prayer shawls that have been given to MUMC members and non-members alike. The shawls are knitted and/or crocheted with love; they are then prayed over by members of What Knots and/or pastoral staff. After that, they are given to people in need (hospitalizations, grief, illness, college students, etc.). The prayer shawls are a means of sharing Jesus' love and comfort to those who receive them.

In the past, a few What Knots members have participated in the Montgomery ISD by meeting with young people at school to teach them to crochet and/or knit. It's a win-win situation for the students to learn a new craft, and for our What Knots group to share our knowledge to ensure crocheting and knitting doesn't become a lost art.

Several different items have been made in the past for MUMC functions - "mug rugs" for new member welcome packets, crosses which were attached to linens for altar drapes in missions outreach, and baby blankets and caps for new arrivals in our church family.

Within the past year, What Knots has partnered with "Warm Up America" - a national organization which accepts crocheted and knitted items. In addition to creating 7" x 9" crocheted and/or knitted blocks which are sewn together by Warm Up America, we also send lap blankets, baby blankets, shawls, scarves and hats. Warm Up America then sends these items to organizations in need around the country. Many times, our afghans, scarves, hats and baby blankets end up with people in the northern states that NEED warm items. We have also begun making afghans, hats and scarves to give to our own Food Bank recipients during the winter months.

In addition to wonderful fellowship with each other every week, What Knots has been the recipient of several yarn donations this past year which has been a tremendous blessing. We've been using the donated yarn to make the items we send to Warm Up America, to make baby blankets and caps for our own church family, and to make afghans to distribute this winter through the Food Pantry. We will always accept monetary and yarn donations in order to continue creating items to bless others!!!

STEPHEN MINISTRY

My name is Kim Austin, and I am a full-time laboratory assistant, and also a Stephen Minister. A Stephen Minister is a lay caregiver who has completed special training to care for others in life crisis. We have several Stephen Ministers in the congregation.

Life is a series of unexpected trials and tribulations and believe me I know! I had a Christian upbringing off and on, I guess you could call us "sometimes" because sometimes we went to church and sometimes, we didn't. In my young adult life, I chose the Culture instead. I am a sinner. I have stumbled, I have tripped, I have fallen, and I've been broken, I have also carried worries, doubts, fear, and anxiety most of my life. It took me 50 years to surrender my life to God, I was tired, overwhelmed, and exhausted. When I started walking with Jesus, I realized I didn't have to carry all this weight by myself. I believe God has blessed us with our unique spiritual gifts. My top three are Mercy, Compassion and Empathy.

I strongly believe that God has called me into Stephen Ministry because He has forgiven me of my sins and He wants me to be able to help other people carry their burdens because of my past. I believe God is using my inequities to help others. I became a Stephen Minister almost 9 years ago and became a Stephen Leader 5 years ago. The Stephen Ministry class was a very intense 50 hours of Christian Care equipping us with the skills and knowledge of scripture and the art of listening, with no judgement and always speaking the truth in love and especially keeping everything confidential. Always keeping Christ in the center. We are the caregivers and God is the cure. We pray God will use us as His conduits so you can also feel His love and peace while your going through a crisis.



Most people are embarrassed or just don't think they need help until:

- After the phone call you hoped you would never get
- After the funeral, when everyone has left
- After the relationship falls apart and the bottom falls out
- After the doctor says I'm sorry but there is nothing more we can do
- After the nursing home director shakes your hand and says welcome to your new home
- After the last child honks the horn, waves goodbye, and drives away the house suddenly feels empty
- After the gavel comes down, the handcuffs go on and your loved one is led away
- After the baby arrives, demanding more than you can give
- After you find a pink slip with your final paycheck
- After your family and friends have heard your story one too many times, but you still need to talk it out
- After the grandparents find out they are having to raise their grandchildren because their adult children have addictions or other issues

Let's face it! Life is hard and it is exhausting. We are human and we are sinners. Sometimes we just get overwhelmed carrying too much weight on our shoulders, when we can give it ALL to God. Remember, we are all children of God. We are here for you.

BREAKFAST

MUMC

Food Pantry



At first glance, the MUMC food pantry is a way to help people in our community who need food, but a closer look reveals it provides much more nourishment to the clients and volunteers alike. It is our primary goal to show love and compassion to our community, which is something that Jesus taught us. Jesus said "Feed the hungry" and "Give drink to the thirsty" (Matthew 25:35). The food pantry is the instrumental way that we can follow Jesus' teachings and help those who are hungry both physically and spiritually.

Each month, on the 1st and 3rd Friday and subsequent Saturday, Montgomery United Methodist Church, along with a host of volunteers, helps to serve neighbors facing hunger within our community including children, seniors, and families in need. This bimonthly distribution helps to feed roughly 440 families and data reflects a demand that continues to increase due to ongoing economic hardships. We see a lot of the same clients each month and our core of volunteers have established supportive relationships with numerous affected by food insecurity. Many new clients enter the parking lot each month with feelings of despair and hopelessness. After engaging with our volunteers, those same clients leave feeling Jesus' love. We offer much more than food 4 times a month. We offer hope and show people that we care, and they are loved.

During the last several months of distribution, we have had several clients register, receive food, and then return the next day of distribution to serve. This is a testament to the work we are doing in the community. Our clients feel Jesus' love through our efforts and several clients have indicated they want to give unto others as they have received.

MUMC 

Food Pantry

We serve as a companion agency with Montgomery County Food Bank and through this partnership, our primary goal is to eliminate hunger for the residents of our community. Our program serves to provide food, encourage the value of nutrition, and increase self-abundance by instilling hope for families that have suffered economic hardship thus resulting in hunger. The power of food relief has a far more meaningful and enduring impact than simply eliminating food insecurity.

A theory on the Hierarchy of Needs identified life's necessities ranging from the very rudimentary, such as essentials required for our survival (i.e. food, shelter) to higher goals such as altruism and spirituality.

We have often seen this hierarchy presented in the form of a pyramid with basic needs serving as the foundation. If a basic need such as nourishment is not being met at the foundational level, individuals can't achieve high-level goals such as spirituality which then has a direct negative impact within our greater community. The impact that results from insufficient food and nutrition affects the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of an individual's life. Through contributions of time, money, and donations by generous donors in the congregation and beyond, we can reduce the impacts of this burden for nearly 2,000 individuals each month.

Many of our clients are senior citizens and have indicated that they never imagined they would be in a food pantry line. Often in conversation with our clients while they are waiting in line, stories are shared about circumstances that have led them to our pantry. The stories are heartbreaking and tough to hear, but even more difficult to live through and endure. We offer prayer, encouragement, love, and hope to the members of our community. Our primary goal is to provide food to those in need, but our most important purpose is to embody the love of Jesus Christ as support during very trying times.

Montgomery United Methodist Food Pantry strives to support individuals and families to achieve one of the most instrumental levels of survival by providing food security to restore hope to members of our community. We average about 25 volunteers each distribution weekend who serve under some difficult conditions due to weather, heavy lifting, and rigor of a distribution weekend. You would not be able to know how difficult this task is by the looks on faces or the messages conveyed to our clients. God is working through us all and many volunteers have openly communicated how they feel blessed by our contribution.

Our objective is to provide a stronger foundation so that this may catalyze positive community growth. Through our service and contributions to this valuable mission, members of our community can feel Jesus' love and grace.

CHILDREN'S CLOTHES CLOSET



"I have my grandchildren with me now and I can't afford to buy clothes for them, but the clothes I get here are really nice and I am so thankful."

At our Clothes Closet, quite a few of our clients don't speak good English (if any) so we rely on our signs which Google has helped us to translate! We have all our notices in both English and Spanish. We laugh a lot with clients while we say some words in English and some in Spanish. In fact, if you ever listened in on a Friday or Saturday closet day you would hear a lot of laughter. We really enjoy our clients and some we have come to know very well. We try to greet each one at the door when they come in and welcome them and make sure they know what to do if it's their first visit. Our clients are learning that they can donate back clothing that has been outgrown and is still usable. They love to feel they are contributing instead of just receiving.

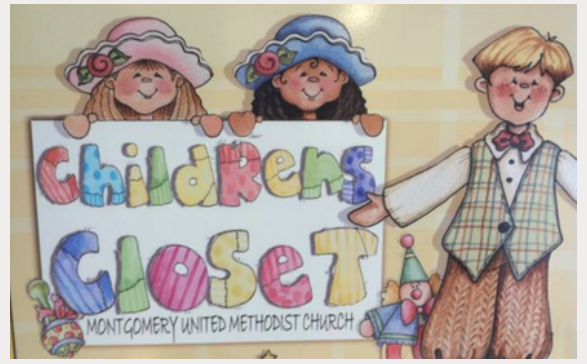
We have a surplus of infant clothing, so we have been "paying it forward," suggesting that clients select 6 or 8 items for a friend or relative who is pregnant or has a baby. They get very excited and enjoy doing that, especially if they know whether they are shopping for a boy or a girl.

We are working hard to fulfill our objective of putting our donated clothing on children who need clothes instead of storing them. I don't think we are going to run out, as we can barely keep up with sorting and hanging our donations.

We are so blessed to be part of a giving community, from our church members, through their extended families and friends, and from our community.

From a little girl hanging tight to the clothes her mother had picked out for her—with a big grin she said, "These are my beautiful clothes."

CHILDREN'S CLOTHES CLOSET



The Kids Closet was set up around 2007, in a small room in the wooden building that housed the Food Pantry. One door to the outside and an inside door to the food pantry. People came to the food pantry via the “back” driveway on the east side of the church property. A couple of wooden park benches were in this open-air area. We set up the folding plastic tables that we had. We put plastic bins of clothes on the tables, so that food pantry clients could go through the bins of clothes, labeled by size and sex, after they picked up their bags of food. (It was very cumbersome and basic, but we served those in need of children’s clothes.) Later, in the years, the new wing was built. Annette Jones obtained clothes racks, hangers and a room in the new wing to house a nice clothes closet for clients. Annette stayed with this ministry and developed it as it grew with the larger Food Bank into the building we now share. Of course, more space was needed. Annette envisioned a separate storage closet that would house the off-season clothing, and the MUMC Carpenters’ Helpers built the present storage closet now storing the off-season clothing. Donations obtained by Annette helped to pay for the building supplies for this storage closet. The clients really appreciate this opportunity to clothe their children. Many clients donate clothes back to the Kids Closet, as they are able. Also, many parents whose children attend MUMC pre-school, donate gently used clothing and new underwear. Church members, our various Sunday School classes, the Assistance League, and the Community also support this project.

This is truly a mission that meets the need of many in our community and spreads the lessons Jesus taught us, sharing the love of God with others.

“I feel so blessed that I can come here to get clothes for my children.”

“Without this clothes closet my children would not have clothes they could wear anywhere. They would have holes in their shoes. Times have been hard and this is where I come to clothe my children.”



MONTGOMERY

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