

SCHOOL OF ESSENTIAL WISDOM

 **FALL TERM, continued** 

OCTOBER

In Search of the Apostles

Forever Beginning Ministry Team Members

UPUMC

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NOVEMBER

Rediscovering the Holy Land and Holy People

Re-Discovering the Holy Land and Holy People

Rabbi Jack Bemporad

We have Dede Casad to thank for our special guest speaker in this series: During a phone conversation in June, Dede asked Rabbi Jack Bemporad, founder of the John Paul II Center for Interreligious Studies in Rome, to give a lecture at our School of Essential Wisdom this fall. Rabbi Bemporad will speak on November 16 on: "The Decisive Significance of the Book of Amos for Understanding the Literary Prophets in the Hebrew Bible." The other Thursdays will feature tours of archeological sites in the Holy Land, and lessons in biblical history.



BIBLICAL MASTERPIECES BIBLE STUDIES

SIX SUNDAYS, 5-6:30 PM Room 103-104

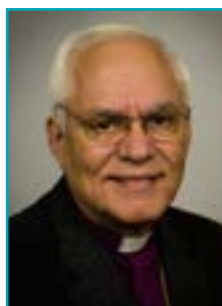
**OCTOBER 8 -
NOVEMBER 19**

Life-Long Lessons from Ephesians

Right Reverend James M. Stanton

We also have Dede to thank for having invited the sixth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Dallas to teach a New Testament class at UPUMC. During his tenure (1993-2014), Bishop Stanton emphasized leadership development for both clergy and laity. Part of his distinguished legacy is the creation of the Stanton Center for Ministry Formation which offers courses in theology and spirituality, "designed to meet the needs of all Christians who desire to grow and mature in their discipleship."

It is not too late to take advantage of this wonderful study! Bishop Stanton has supplied his own "paraphrase" of Ephesians from the Greek, and abundant contextual material. Do NOT miss out on this terrific opportunity for an in-depth study of the letter to the church at Ephesus!



ERRATA: In the last issue of *Words to the Wise*, we reported that Dr. Dede Casad knew Rev. Keith Boone when he was a boy at **Plymouth Park** UMC. This is erroneous. Rev. Boone and his family attended **Kessler Park** UMC, where Rev. Dr. Gordon Casad, Dede's husband, was pastor. The editor apologizes for this error.

FIND US ONLINE: To view detailed information about our Forever Beginning Ministry, and to read the current *Words to the Wise* and past issues (*Senior Spotlight*) of the newsletter please visit our website at www.upumc.org/seniors.

Forever Beginning Ministries

Words to the Wise

Vol. XXIII Issue 7 | OCTOBER 2023



A Balm for Senior-itis

Getting that "senior" label is kind of a mixed bag, isn't it? Senior discounts sound great. Other senior labels? Maybe not so much. I've never heard my grandchildren say, "I can't wait to be a senior citizen!" The grandkids seem to think that "senior" and "elderly" are synonymous. Just behind "ancient." Many of us, on the other hand, know what the word means and feel as though we are approaching that landmark, but are not quite there.

There are those of us who will pause when the person taking our order on the other end of the line asks, "Are you a Senior?" That pause is needed to decide how badly we want that discount. For others, it's a designation to be avoided at all costs. The term for that attitude is "denial."

Society doesn't help much. We're stuffed into categories based on the number of birthdays we've celebrated. Whether retired, still working, volunteering, or confined to a nursing home, once we hit 65, it seems we're in the same demographic. My soon-to-be 98-year-old mother would object to that. She would want you to know that she's in a lot better shape than I am.

Here at UPUMC, we have a ministry targeted for ages 55 and up. We have it because a visionary walked in the door one day with a mission, a plan. Her name was Dede Casad and we miss her terribly. She saw a need to recognize and serve a group that seeks to maintain its vitality as well and as long as possible. Her vision became known as Senior Life Ministries.

Your UP Academy has a goal of reaching and serving as many of UPUMC's "more experienced" members as possible, through the School of Essential Wisdom, Wisdom of the Sages podcasts, Sunday Evening Bible Study, extending service opportunities, encouraging intergenerational activities, etc. We also want to attract as many participants as possible and there was a sense that the term "senior" was not fully reflective of what we were trying to offer. In short, we needed to change our brand.

But what do we call this entity if we eliminate "Senior"? The committee bounced around numerous catchy phrases like "Boomers & Beyond" and "Growing Gray". (Maybe I made that part up.) At one point, our intrepid leader, Mary Jo McCurley, raised her hand and said: "I've got it." After a pause, she simply said, "Forever Beginning." Brilliant! We all knew that was it. It was Dede's tagline, her motto. The ultimate tribute to a great mind and fearsome force. For that reason, you are now reading *Words to the Wise*, rather than the *Senior Spotlight*. We are now serving under the banner of "Forever Beginning Ministries." It is a lasting tribute to Dede and a reminder of her vision for each one of us. We love it, and hope you do too!

Until next time, Many Blessings,
Mark S. Parker

P.S. -- Fear not, friends, this transition will in no way affect your discounts. -- MSP

Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever. - Mohandas Gandhi

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UPUMC pets came out to be blessed on the first Sunday of the month. They were prayed over, petted, and treated to special pupcakes made by Abby Scott!



Carver Scott waited so very patiently for his treat. Wonder how many pupcakes he'd eaten at home?



Dash Farmer brought his humans, Barb and Nora Grace, along for his 1-on-1 with Pastor Jennifer!



Gabby Franklin participated remotely via photo sent with her human, Chrys. "You know how uncivilized canines can be in crowds," Gabby explained.



Eight-month-old Honey Merwin was very "chill" as she waited her turn to be blessed. Her family, Hollis, Leila, and Jackson, were proud of her excellent behavior.



Francis Edwin "Eddie" West received his first UPUMC benediction from Pastor Joe. He was excited to meet the other dogs who were gathered on the lawn for their blessings. Eddie seemed to approve of the refreshments, too.



Clay James Messer wanted to check with his boy, Macon, before he agreed to do this church thing. So Brooke, Macon's mom, stepped in to assure Clay that everything was going to be all right, and let him know that Macon would be right back with a pupcake for him!



This was not Ranger Glockner's first rodeo! He's participated in the annual blessing liturgy many times before. Dick Glockner and Mike Larsen adopted him at the State Fair ten years ago.

Introducing: Trey West UPUMC's Director of Communications

Trey West came to UPUMC's Communications Department in June of this year. He does not characterize himself as the director of a department, however. He thinks of his position as ministry, and you will soon find out why.

Trey was born in Snellville, Georgia, northeast of Atlanta. The youngest of three children, he moved with his family when he was only six months old to Birmingham, Alabama. Along with his brother and sister, Trey grew up in a deeply religious family who belonged to the Assembly of God Church. He describes his home church as "Wesleyan Pentecostal" because of its grace-based theology.

Throughout his elementary years, he attended a private Christian school, then a public high school in Alabaster, a suburb of Birmingham. His mother had trained in vocal performance, but Trey was the only one of her children who inherited her love for and dedication to singing. His tenor voice earned him a place in multiple church and school choirs during his formative years. When it was time to enter college, however, he had set his sights on becoming a lawyer, so he opted to major in Political Science. Before he went off to the University of Montevallo, however, Trey's high school choir director talked him into a double major: Political Science and Vocal Performance!

After just a few short months into his first semester at UM, Trey knew he wanted to major exclusively in music. He dropped the Political Science major and focused solely on Vocal Performance, all the while taking classes in conducting and assisting his college choir director. During his undergraduate studies, his college choir director convinced him to pursue a future in choral conducting. This led to Texas for the first time when he moved here to pursue a Masters in Choral Conducting at Texas A&M University-Commerce.

After grad school, Trey served at Christ UMC in Plano for 3 years. Their long-time Music Director, Pat Messick, became his mentor, convincing Trey that he was called into full-time ministry. In 2015, Trey assumed the role of Director of Music and Worship at Keller UMC. After three wonderful years, he had an opportunity to join the staff of Dauphin Way UMC in Mobile, Alabama, and be closer to family in Alabama.

In 2019, Becca and Trey married here in Texas, but stayed in Alabama for three more years. During that time, Trey began to feel drawn toward a different, albeit related, kind of ministry. He was beginning to discern why he felt more drawn toward church communications at that point in his career. He reflected how passionately he felt that the primary message of churches: love, acceptance, belonging, welcome -- was not being communicated effectively, despite the best intentions of most houses of worship. So, when he was offered a position as Director of Communications at First Methodist Carrollton, the Wests moved back "home" to Texas.

Trey was excited to have a hand in ALL the ministries in a church because he was articulating their message in new exciting ways to reach the congregation and the wider community.

When First Carrollton's congregation voted to disaffiliate, however, Trey decided to resign. The staff and congregants were very gracious about his decision. And the Holy Spirit must have been at work, because the very next day, he read the announcement of UPUMC's opening for a Communications Director. And the rest, as they say, is history!

The Wests live in The Colony. Becca teaches sixth-grade math at Rice Middle School in Plano ISD (the same middle school she actually attended!) They are fortunate to parent the best dog in the Metroplex: Eddie West!

