

## OPEN DOOR CHRISTIAN CHURCH

# Messenger

## “Getting Younger”



One of my responsibilities at Open Door Christian Church is to help us transition into a church God envisioned us to be in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The church will take on a new feel while resolving the problems of the past. The problems you identified are:

- Conflict had gotten out of control,
- **Lack of young people,**
- Lack of communication,
- Confusion over what we are to do,
- Not sure of the church’s purpose,
- Can’t keep a preacher.

**NOTE:** These are the same issues that plague 200,000 churches in America that cause 10-12,000 churches to close each year!

**DOUBLE NOTE:** Very few churches are making the effort to do what you are doing! We are becoming a model of hope for struggling churches!

For the next several weeks, I will give the solution to these issues that will go a long way to being a healthy Body of Jesus Christ.

The concern being addressed in this article is outlined in red: **Getting younger!**

This is the most challenging problem that needs to be addressed in 90% of the churches in America! There are basically three generations missing from the church. The church’s solution to reaching the younger generations is to hire a younger preacher! When that doesn’t work, the church gets frustrated with the preacher who gets frustrated with the church and that leads to problem #6 on our list! Getting a younger preacher does not bring in younger people any more than me getting a tummy tuck and face lift make me a younger man. That hasn’t worked and it won’t ever work!

The three generations missing from the church see life differently than the three generations above them. If we want to be serious about reaching young families and young people, we must adjust to them...not the other way around. OUCH!

**We must also believe in the depths of our hearts that what Jesus has to offer is what all people seek, and we will do everything in our ability to “show them” what that looks like with our loving actions!**

To be serious about reaching three missing generations we must do the following:

**Identify the values and passions of the three generations missing from the church.** These generations are service oriented. They want to change the world and impact the planet more than making money or building a career or have a 401k. They want to understand why following Jesus is important to their life and that leads to changing the world. They learn more by observing the actions of others. They seek to “feel” God’s presence. Practicing what one preaches is how trust is earned. Hypocrisy is out; being “real” is in!

**Adjust how the church functions without compromising our identity.** We have allowed “what we do” define “who we are”. The two are not the same! Our amazing identity as Disciples of Christ has always been to create a unified body of believers who transform ordinary people into “Priesthoods of Believers”. We are to be Biblically knowledgeable and led by the Spirit to do extra-ordinary acts of ministry regardless of gender, orientation, age, or whatever! Our identity never changes! What changes is “how” we do church in ways that catches the imagination of the generations we are reaching.

**Use the maturity and experience of the congregation.** Young families seek older adults to help them in life and faith. With families scattered across the county, we can be a wealth of knowledge and experience that can shape and form the faith of young people. The key is not to feel threatened by their presence or feel like the church is being taken away from us and given to them. Instead, we must be excited about reaching and mentoring young people into maturity of the faith! This is an AMAZING ministry God has given us!

**Invest in young families in impactful ways.** Another adjustment that must be made is to place a high priority (actions and budget) in three areas:

**Mentoring young adults, youth, and children ministries** – use relatable staff or leaders to help disciple this group, invest in great facilities or creative ways to teach and train them,

**Worship and technology** – create a worship atmosphere that “feels” the presence of God in ways that are relevant to the unchurched, and

**Marketing** – the new way people enter a relationship with the church. A strong presence in social media builds trust, answers questions, and gets them comfortable with a church long before a visit takes place.

ALL churches want to get young but very few are willing to invest in ways that impact young families. It requires a great investment and sacrifice on behalf of the church to disciple young people and show that they matter.

## Carolyn's Musings



Contact: Carolyn Allen  
nchornedfrog73@yahoo.com

Our calendars might say that it just turned to the new year, but at church we are already a month into our calendar, which begins with Advent. I like having such a significant time in the church year right at the

beginning. In the secular calendar, the new year begins on the tail of all the festivities of the holidays. New Year's can almost seem like a bit of a letdown.

But not so in the church. We start our year off getting prepared for another year of our journey of following Jesus Christ and striving to be faithful disciples. And then we celebrate the great gift of God born unto us. Emmanuel. God with us.

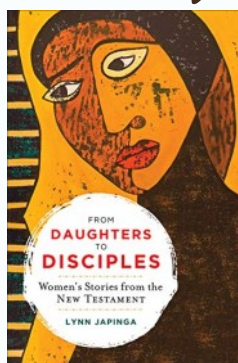
Let us use this running start to our new church year and commit to a year of following Christ more closely, making the church a place where all are welcomed and encouraged to share their gifts as we all learn to better love God, each other, and ourselves.

## January Preaching Schedule

1/2	Carolyn	John 1: 10-18
1/9	Danny	Luke 14: 16-23
1/16	Danny	Matthew 26: 16-20
1/23	Michael	2 Timothy 2:2
1/30	Carolyn	1 Cor 12:12-31a

*Our condolences to friends and family of Sally Lindley, who died Saturday, December 11, 2021 at the Atrium.*

## Tuesday Night Book Study



Please join us as we read and discuss *From Daughters to Disciples* by Lynn Japinga. It's about women from the New Testament. Newcomers are always welcome! Please join us Tuesday nights (except the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month) on zoom at 7 pm.

## Shared Reflections

### Book Club

This month our book club is reading *Olympus, Texas* by Stacey Swann. We'd love for you to join us on zoom for a lively discussion about the book. We meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 11 am. Contact Carolyn for more information.





## A Message from Your Elders

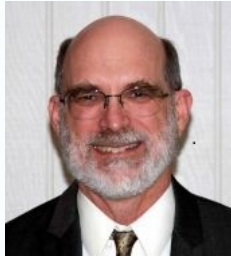
Contact: Jim Stones, Chair

jestones@sbcglobal.net

713-614-0868

The season of advent is when we focus on hope, peace, joy, and love. At least that should be our priority. The takeover of the season by materialistic influences challenges us. Hope is too often focused upon gifts rather than anticipation of the Christ child. Instead of peace, many families face stress at this time of the year. What should be a time of joy is a prime season for suicide and loneliness. Love is forgotten as we worry over busy schedules or difficulty finding the right gifts.

None of these modern concerns accompanied Mary and Joseph as they arrived in Bethlehem. Although they owned little and had no place to stay, they awaited a great treasure. My sincere wish is that each of us will take the time to remember the true meaning of Christmas and take time to appreciate the wondrous gift given to the world. When we sing "Joy to the World", it should be an accurate assessment of our attitudes



## Treasurer's Report

Contact: John E. Lindley, Treasurer

treasurer.mdcc@gmail.com

NOVEMBER 2021

### General Fund Income vs Expense

	November	YTD	YTD Budget
Giving Income	9,121.33	124,952.71	138,600.00
Other Income	65.54	8,464.31	1,100.00
Expense	22,490.64	169,994.80	191,282.56
Balance	(13,303.77)	(36,577.78)	(51,582.56)
Txfer From DF	0.00	25,000.00	0.00
Final Balance	(13,303.77)	(11,577.78)	(51,582.56)

### Cash Assets & Debt

General Fund	
Checking	11,463.09
Liabilities & Amortized Inc, Exp	2,895.00
Savings (Charles Schwab)	2,479.20
Church Revitalization Reserve	375,000.00
Undesignated Memorial Funds	186,762.66
Designated Funds	499,516.48
New Beginnings Fund	3,520,392.28
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,598,508.71</b>

### Comments

Our giving income in November was down significantly (again following the pattern of last year) and our expenses were up as most of the budget for Outreach was spent in November, leaving us with a significant deficit for the month. Still our deficit remains less than budgeted. If you have any questions, please send an email to [treasurer.mdcc@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.mdcc@gmail.com).

John E. Lindley, Treasurer. 12/5/2021

## Outreach Ministries

Contact: Frank Conner

fwconner@sbcglobal.net



A big thanks to all those that contributed toys and/or gift cards for MAM's Christmas Share project. Over 200 hundred families (almost 400 children) were provided toys/ gift card and a new blanket for Christmas.

During the month of January 2022, there will be a "Mountain of Food" drive for the East Spring Branch Food Pantry. There is no limit to the type and quantity of non-perishable items you may choose to purchase. Anytime during January, please drop off food items at the Korean Center. Heavy sacks are available, if needed. Contact Frank Conner, [fwconner@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fwconner@sbcglobal.net), for pickup from your home, if needed. The collected food will be delivered to the Food Pantry in February.

### Grocery Shopping List

In any amount, single family size

\*\*No glass containers\*\*

Canned Meat	Canned Vegetables	Canned Fruit
Rice	Dried Beans	Soup/Chili
Breakfast Cereal	Peanut Butter	Sugar
Meat/Chicken Broth	Graham Crackers	Coffee/Tea
Pasta/ Spaghetti/ Mac n Cheese		Jell-o/Pudding
Cake/ Cornbread/ Biscuit Mix		Box of Crackers



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<https://www.facebook.com/odcchouston>

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1809 Hollister Street  
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**RETURN ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

## [Open Door Christian Church](#)

### How to reach us:

Website: [odcchouston.com](http://odcchouston.com)

Email: [contact@odcchouston.com](mailto:contact@odcchouston.com)

Phone: 713-789-0060

*You'll have the opportunity to leave a message in one of five different mailboxes, so don't hang up until you're finished!*

Mail: Open Door Christian Church  
1809 Hollister Street  
Houston, TX 77080

### Or Join the Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82094663021?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82094663021?pwd=bzJ6MldHZ2lqVElFTjRtSXR5UFArQT09)  
[pwd=bzJ6MldHZ2lqVElFTjRtSXR5UFArQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82094663021?pwd=bzJ6MldHZ2lqVElFTjRtSXR5UFArQT09)