

## OPEN DOOR CHRISTIAN CHURCH

*Messenger*

## “WHAT IS THE CHURCH’S PURPOSE?”

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:



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

The concern being addressed in this article is outlined in red: **Can’t keep a preacher!**

Let’s open up this can of worms, shall we? Currently, there are major disconnections between four major institutions: The Church, the Seminaries, the preachers, and the leadership of our denomination. These four institutions are on completely different pages when it comes to building God’s Kingdom and preachers are getting the worse of it at the tune of 1000-1500 ministers (includes all denominations) per year finding new ways to make a living.

The key to keeping preachers is for all four institutions to be on the same page and get us out of 1964 and into a new and exciting ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. What does this new and exciting ministry look like? It begins with a change (repent) in the way we have been conditioned to think and act from our business model. How do we keep a preacher?

1. Do not see the Preacher as an employee of the church who is under the control of the board or Elders, who is to do the work of the church for most of the members and is to be judged by the numbers on the last page of the bulletin. We must see Clergy for who they are: God’s messengers called to give direction to the church. Every person who enters ministry does so because he or she has felt God calling him or her into service. Churches need to honor this and be willing to adjust to the vision God has given them and surround him or her with a healthy, mature group of Elders.
2. Elders work in unison with the Clergy and are united by God’s vision for the church. It is critical that the Elders grow with the minister until the vision for the church is understood and the Elders become one voice with the minister.
3. Throw job descriptions in the trash and understand and accept the minister’s Spiritual Gifts (strengths) and weaknesses. God gave the minister a job description we should trust, not change. When the church changes God’s job description for the minister, this quickly leads to burn out, frustration, resentment, job searches, and career changes. Elders need to gain a clear understanding of the job description God has given the minister and hold the minister accountable to honoring the role God called him or her to play and help fill the void.

Paul’s image of the church is not for a hired employee to run the church or be responsible for the doing what the “members” think he or she should be doing. The mature leaders of the church (Elders) are to oversee the health and direction of the church. The Clergy enhances the church’s ministry. Clergy bring to light the path God is leading the church. Clergy are a new, refreshing breath of God who keeps the church from being stagnant and complacent by constantly moving the church in the direction God needs us to go!

That’s how you keep a preacher!!

*Danny*

## Carolyn's Musings

Contact: Carolyn Allen  
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One of the things I like most about Paul's letters are his greetings, like this one from the book of Philemon: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God." Can you imagine if we were so open with God's love when we encountered each other?

What a community can be built when we hold each other in the love of God which is given to us so freely! I believe it is God's dream for us to share this love by caring for each other. Together, we can build the kingdom, where all of God's children are surrounded, supported, and sustained by love. Let us begin by offering prayers of thanks to God for the love and encouragement of those that have led us to be a part of this community of faith.

## Shared Reflections Book Club

This month our book club is reading *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict. 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 11:00 am. Contact Carolyn for more information.

## 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.

## MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Contact: Larry Neal  
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Well... it's been 2 years since the Men's Fellowship last met. There has been a lot of water under the bridge so we should be ready to tell some mostly true stories... but the true part is not a requirement. If you have not heard of our men's group, we get together once a month and I throw out single topic and go around the table for each person's comments. It's fun, sometimes revealing and always entertaining. Our restart will occur on Thursday, **February 17, 9:30 AM** on the second floor, in the library room of the Korean Community Center (KCC) 1809 Hollister.

Please send me an email if you will be able to attend so I can set up the room and also send an advance email on the topic of discussion.

**JOURNEY CLASS** will begin on Sunday, February 6 at 10:00 A.M. at the Korean Community Center/Open Door Christian Church...in person!

Contact: Joyce Stones  
jastones@sbcglobal.net



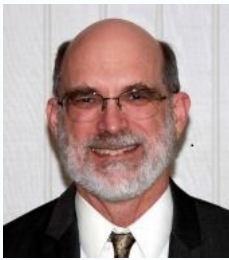
It has been quite a journey!

This will be a discussion class with Joyce Stones as facilitator. We will meet from 10:00 – 10:45, with church starting at 11:00. We will meet in the library upstairs to the right as you get off of the elevator. It is a very large room. It has tables & chairs, dry erase board, and if you want to be there and really keep your distance, there are comfortable living room type chairs away from the tables.

This will be a class open to anyone who would like to join us for a couple of months for a study of The Sermon on the Mount...A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of God. By Amy-Jill Levine. If this begins to feel like a small group you would like to Journey with for a longer period of time, you are invited to make that decision, too.

Here is a flavor of the book from the introduction: As we share the good news with others, we need to think about two questions, "How do I know this?" and "Why do I care?". "With Jesus as our teacher for the Sermon on the Mount, we are guaranteed to be engaged. If we put in the work, sharing the truth of the gospel will become stirring and inspirational. Jesus' message is indeed Good News!

Let's wear our masks and have a good time...I am going to wear my new hearing aids so I can hear you from behind your masks. We might sing and listen to music from time to time. We will teach each other, lean on one another, and be inspired by one another's insights to equip us to indeed be disciples.



## Treasurer's Report

Contact: John E. Lindley, Treasurer  
treasurer.mdcc@gmail.com

December 2021

### General Fund Income vs Expense

	December	YTD	YTD Budget
Giving Income	9,105.34	134,058.05	151,200.00
Other Income	67.21	8,531.52	1,200.00
Expense	23,185.65	193,180.45	210,615.52
Balance	(14,013.10)	(50,590.88)	(58,215.52)
Txfer From DF	10,000.00	35,000.00	0.00
Final Balance	(4,013.10)	(15,590.88)	(58,215.52)

### Cash Assets & Debt

General Fund	
Checking	7,449.97
Liabilities & Amortized Inc, Exp	2,174.48
Savings (Charles Schwab)	2,479.22
Church Revitalization Reserve	365,000.00
Undesignated Memorial Funds	183,331.11
Designated Funds	498,079.93
New Beginnings Fund	<u>3,455,802.58</u>
Total	4,514,317.29

### Comments

Our giving income in December was almost identical to November. Our expenses were up again, mostly due to spending more on the new TVs for our worship space. Our deficit remains less than budgeted, though it is now much closer to the original estimate. I've had to pull more from our reserve fund and will have to do so again soon. If you have any questions, please send an email to [treasurer.mdcc@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.mdcc@gmail.com). John E. Lindley, Treasurer. 1/2/2022

You can easily make a one-time or repeating donation to Open Door Christian Church from your debit/credit card. You can choose the fund, and your gift will be processed immediately. To make a gift now, go to

<https://mdcc.ccbchurch.com/goto/giving>

## A Message from Your Elders

Contact: Jim Stones, Chair  
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713-614-0868



One of the key ingredients to our success at Open Door Christian Church is active involvement of members in small groups. We currently have an online Prayer Session on Tuesday afternoons and an in-person Prayer Group on Thursday mornings. We will soon have additional opportunities.

Beginning on February 6, there will be a Sunday School class at KCC beginning at 10:00 led by Joyce Stones. The initial study will address the Sermon on the Mount. Danny Couch is planning a similar study online covering the same material. In addition to the value of small group membership, both opportunities help facilitate growing in knowledge and understanding of our faith. There will soon be a Men's Fellowship group meeting at KCC once per month. Details and invitations will be forthcoming from Larry Neal.

ODCC is starting to transform from discussing our mission to actually living our plan. I sincerely hope all of you will explore these or other opportunities to be actively involved. It promises to be a good year for our congregation!

### February Preaching Schedule

2/6	Danny	John 15: 5-8
2/13	Carolyn	Luke 6: 17-26
2/20	Danny	Matthew 28: 16-20
2/27	Michael	2 Timothy 2:2



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

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## [Open Door Christian Church](#)

### How to reach us:

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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?pwd=bzJ6MldHZ2lqVElFTjRtSXR5UFArQT09>