



West District News

September, 2018



The Bread of Life

Among the precious memories from my childhood are family trips to Corpus Christi, where both sets of my grandparents lived. Even as a kid, I was aware of the contrast of cultures we experienced on those trips. My Dad's parents, Grandmommy and Pop, lived in a working-class neighborhood near the chemical plants along the ship channel. My Mom's parents, Granny J and Daddydoc, lived in what I thought of as a mansion or estate in the central part of town.

Both of my grandmothers were excellent cooks, but with very different styles. This difference was most evident in my spiritual food – **biscuits!**

Grandmommy Smith made country biscuits for us every morning. She could whip up a batch of perfect biscuits without looking at a recipe or measuring a single ingredient. And my favorite way to eat them was smothered in steaming hot, creamy potato gravy. I didn't really know it at the time, but this was peasant food. I just knew it was wonderful!

By contrast, Granny J (Jasperson) was a high-end caterer. Her kitchen was outfitted with commercial fridges, freezers, mixers and ovens. And in the freezer, there was almost always a supply of angel biscuits; delicious and delicate yeast-rising biscuits which were a staple in her catering repertoire. Unless they were set aside for an upcoming event, we kids were allowed to help ourselves to as many angel biscuits as we wanted. We just had to be patient enough to warm them in the oven (pre-microwave era).

Every time I make biscuits I think of both of my grandmothers and my "biscuit narrative" and I give thanks. **God is good!**

The Bible, you know, has a rich bread narrative and theology – God provided bread (manna) in the wilderness, the Shunamite widow and Elisha lived off an ever-replenishing jar of meal, Jesus fed the 5,000 with five small loaves of bread, Jesus taught us to pray *give us this day our daily bread*, and he said, "I am the Bread of Life." I believe that Jesus' disciples remembered this bread narrative when he said, at the Last Supper, **"Take and eat, this is my body broken for you."**

God does, indeed, supply our daily bread; and he nourishes our souls in so many ways, not the least of which is the redemptive, life-giving body and blood of Jesus Christ. Every time we eat the bread of the Eucharist, we remember that Jesus, and our faith in him, is the Bread of Life, and we give thanks. **God is very, very good!**

Blessings and peace,

Rev. Andy Smith

PS: Here are my biscuit recipes. The Angel Biscuit recipe is for a pretty large batch, but it was the smallest batch Granny J would make. (see page 2)

Angel Biscuits

5 cups all-purpose flour	1 cup shortening
¼ cup sugar	2 pkg active dry yeast
1 Tbs Baking powder	2 cups buttermilk
1 tsp Baking soda	
1 ½ tsp salt	

Sift together dry ingredients, then cut in shortening (I use my standup mixer). Gently heat ½ cup buttermilk to 105°-115°, and dissolve yeast in it along with a pinch of sugar, and allow it to bloom. Add yeast mixture and remaining buttermilk to dry ingredients, mixing until a soft dough develops. Cover and allow to rise. (You may refrigerate at this point and later remove the desired amount of dough for biscuits.)

Take approximately 1/3 of dough for one dozen large biscuits. Roll on a lightly floured surface to ½ thick. Cut biscuits and place on greased or parchment-lined baking sheet. Lightly brush the tops with melted butter and prove for about one hour. Bake at 375° for 12-13 minutes.

Country Biscuits

2 cups all-purpose flour	½ cup shortening
½ tsp sugar	2/3 cup whole milk
1+ Tbs Baking powder	
½ tsp salt	

Mix together dry ingredients in a large bowl. Cut in shortening. Add milk and stir with a fork (or hands) until a dough just starts to form. Dump it all out on a floured surface and knead gently until it comes together (restraint is essential to avoid tough biscuits). Roll out to ½ - ¾ inch thick. Cut biscuits and place on baking sheet. Bake at 400° for 11-12 minutes.

A Christian Greeting



On June 17th, a very dear friend of mine lost the fight with cancer, hours before, she wrote this prayer.

Cathie's Prayer

Our dear friends, so many of you have asked if there was anything you could do during our time of trial.....after much thought, I now know what you can do. Relationships are all that matter! So if you have a relationship that needs mending, please do not leave this place without making an effort to mend it. It doesn't matter who did what, who said what, or why. Just do it!

And, if the relationship in your life that needs mending is the one between you and God, most importantly, mend that one!! Because I want to see you again, where I am now!

With the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, walking and talking on the streets of gold. Amen.

Love,

Cathie

July 31, 1955 - June 17, 2018

*More of Him, Less of Me,
Gini*

Ministry through Administration

Charge Conference Dates: (Times to be determined)

North East Sub-Group October 14, 2018 at San Saba
(Melvin, Brady, Goldthwaite, Star, Center City, San Saba)

South Sub-Group October 21, 2018 at Brackettville
(Rocksprings, Barksdale, Eldorado, Brackettville, Sonora, Del Rio:First & Princeipe de Paz)

North Sub-Group October 28, 2018 at Sterling City
(Miles, Odessa, Robert Lee, Sterling City, Bronte, Veribest, Paint Rock)

South East Sub-Group November 11, 2018 at Mason
(Menard, Hilda, Art, Castell, Mason, Junction, London)

Central Sub-Group November 18, 2018 at Sierra Vista
(Christoval, Grape Creek, SA:FUMC, Sierra Vista, Betel, St. Luke)

Forms will be on the website soon, www.umcwayoutwest.org. Let me know if you have any questions.

Let's stay connected,
Amy

Pastors and Professionals Meeting
Wednesday, September 5, 2018
Gather: 9:30 a.m.—Worship: 10:00 a.m.
London United Methodist Church
 (behind London Hall)

Cost: \$10.00
 (all funds go to the host church for expenses and lunch)

Please RSVP to the District Office, (325)486-1500 or westamy@suddenlinkmail.com as soon as possible, so a count can be given to the church. Thank you!

Reminder:

All Clergy Assessment forms are due in the District Office before October 1, 2018. (Not to be confused with the Consultation Forms due later in the year.) The Clergy Assessment forms were mailed to the Pastors and the S/PPRC Chairs. If you need additional forms or if you have questions please contact Amy at the District Office.

District UMW Meeting
Saturday, September 15, 2018



Schedule:	
9:45 - 10:10 am	Registration and light refreshments
10:15 am	Program
12:00 pm	Lunch (chicken spaghetti - \$10.00)
1:15 - 2:45 pm	Business Meeting

We would love to have all women who attend any United Methodist Church in the West District to join us. You may RSVP to Beverly Bell at bevbell2009@gmail.com OR the Robert Lee UMC office at (325) 453-2417. This helps us better prepare for lunch☐

If you'd like further information about the West District UMW organization and programs, please contact Charlene Bustos at chardbustos@gmail.com or cell (325) 374-7678.

Make Plans to attend the HealthFlex Implementation Meeting September 13, 2018 10:00AM - 12:00PM @ First UMC San Angelo

Dear Clergy,

As we have shared, on January 1, 2019, our HealthFlex plan for full-time clergy and covered lay participants will change significantly giving many more choices of medical, dental and vision plans. Depending on plan selections, participants will also have the opportunity to elect additional tax savings plans such as a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) or Health Savings Account. We are excited about the flexibility HealthFlex will offer with greater opportunities to tailor healthcare.

Our district HealthFlex implementation meetings are designed to help streamline and navigate this process. Many of our health plan participants have never had to make a health care plan selection, so carefully reviewing the plan options is critical in choosing the right individual or family coverage. The goal is to have every participant take action during the annual election period starting October 31st. Not electing a plan during the annual election period will automatically default participants to a different plan from the current coverage. Online tools will also be available starting in September to assist in making plan selections for 2019. Spouses are welcome to attend. Meetings have been scheduled throughout the Conference and are open to all plan participants.

September 13:

West District

First UMC San Angelo,
10 AM - 12:00 Noon
37 E. Beauregard Ave.
San Angelo, TX 76903

September 12:

El Valle & Coastal Bend Districts

First UMC Kingsville,
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
230 W. Kleberg
Kingsville, TX 78363-4428

September 4:

Capital District

Westlake UMC,
10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
1460 Red Bud Trail
Austin, TX 78746

September 18:

Las Misiones District

Blueprint Ministry, San Antonio
10:15 AM - 12:00 Noon
2926 S. Presa
San Antonio, TX 78210

September 11:

Hill Country District

First UMC Kerrville,
10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
321 Thompson Dr.
Kerrville, TX 78028

October 2:

Crossroads District

First UMC Gonzales,
10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
426 St. Paul
Gonzales, TX 78629

If you have any questions, please contact Isabel Munoz at imunoz@riotexas.org or call (210) 408-4526

See you this fall,

Isabel Muñoz
Associate Director of Human Resources

2019 HealthFlex Rates

Clergy Annual HealthFlex Credit	Clergy	Clergy + 1	Clergy + Family	2 Clergy + Family
Total Cost	\$10,260	\$20,520	\$25,872	\$25,872
Apportioned	\$2,052	\$2,052	\$2,052	\$4,104
Church Contribution	\$8,208	\$8,208	\$8,208	\$16,416
Dependent cost for Pastor or Church		\$10,260	\$15,612	\$5,352
DIRECT BILL TO CHURCH	\$8,208	\$18,468	\$23,820	\$21,768

Clergy Monthly HealthFlex Credit	Clergy	Clergy + 1	Clergy + Family	2 Clergy + Family
Total Cost	\$855	\$1,710	\$2,156	\$2,156
Apportioned	\$171	\$171	\$171	\$342
Church's Contribution	\$684	\$684	\$684	\$1,368
Dependent cost for Pastor or Church		\$855	\$1,301	\$446
DIRECT BILL TO CHURCH	\$684	\$1,539	\$1,985	\$1,814

Lay HealthFlex Credit	Lay	Lay + 1	Lay + Family	
Annual	\$10,260	\$20,520	\$25,872	
Monthly	\$855	\$1,710	\$2,156	

The Rio Grande Legacy Fund will continue to provide contributions to eligible legacy churches for clergy appointed full-time (individual clergy premium).

Each full-time clergy will receive a monthly individual Defined Contribution (DC) or "Credit" in the HealthFlex plan of \$855 (funded through church) and will choose from the plan options offered during open enrollment.

Effective December 31, 2018, the HealthFlex Waiver provision will be eliminated. Any church where a clergy has chosen to not participate in HealthFlex will need to fund the Defined Contribution or premium through direct billing effective January 1, 2019. \$8,208 will need to be incorporated into the 2019 church budget and reported on the 2019 Compensation Form.

2019 Clergy Pension Rates

- CRSP Defined Benefit contribution of **\$5,866** for each eligible full-time clergy.
- CRSP Defined contribution of **3%** of Plan Compensation for each eligible full-time clergy.
- CPP contribution of **3%** of Plan Compensation for each eligible full-time clergy.
- UMPIP-PT Contribution of **9%** of Plan Compensation for each part-time clergy (3/4 appointment or less).

2019 Minimum Compensation

The minimum compensation levels for 2019 shall be:

\$40,800 For a Full or Probationary member

\$37,800 For an Associate member

\$34,700 For an Approved Local Pastor or member of another denomination

- Plus a bonus of \$75 for each year of service completed after 2nd year with a maximum of \$1,425
- Plus a bonus of \$200 for 2nd church in charge and \$100 for each additional church in the charge.

Do you have a will? Have you arranged for someone to have Power of Attorney for you in the event you are physically or mentally unable to make your own decisions? Have you considered who will take care of your minor children if something were to happen to both you and your spouse? What if your elderly parents require care? Where can you turn for help for these and many other decisions? Let us help you make sense of these puzzling issues.



Veribest, TX, UMC & St Luke UMC, San Angelo, will offer

Are You Ready?

Things You Need to Know Before You Go!

End of life planning to help you understand:

Importance of Emergency Contacts
Directive to Physicians
Medical Power of Attorney
Home Health Issues
Care of Minor Children
Survivorship
Funeral Planning



Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)
Understanding Palliative Care
Guardianship
Power of Attorney
Disability
And much more

Due to the amount of information to be shared, and the number of professionals presenting the information, ***Are You Ready?*** will be offered on two Saturdays:



October 6 & October 20

9a - 2:30p

Lunch provided



Are You Ready? will be held in the
St Luke United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall

2781 W. Ave. N, San Angelo, TX

A registration Fee of \$20 will cover both Saturday sessions. The registration fee is payable via cash or check at the first session, to cover the cost of materials and lunches.

Note: A notary will be available to assist attendees in filling out the Durable Power of Attorney form.

To register call the St. Luke UMC Office:

325-949-1545

or register online at:

www.stluke-sanangelo.org

Registration deadline: Friday, September 28.



Calendar

- Sept. 3 District Office Closed
4 Concho Country Emmaus Gathering, Sierra Vista UMC
5 Pastors and Professionals Meeting, London UMC
13 HealthFlex Meeting, SA:FUMC
13 District Strategy Team Meeting, 1:30 p.m., SA:FUMC
15 District UMW Meeting, Robert Lee UMC
19-20 Cabinet Meeting
20-23 Andy – Vacation
26-28 Andy – Leadership Institute
- Oct. 2 Concho Country Emmaus Gathering, Sierra Vista UMC
6 Are You Ready, St. Luke UMC, 9:00 – 2:30
11-13 Andy – Do No Harm / COSROW
11 Amy – Conference Office
14 North East Sub-Group Charge Conference, San Saba, Time TBD
16 Amy – Spiritual Retreat
20 Are You Ready, St. Luke UMC, 9:00 – 2:30
21 South Sub-Group Charge Conference, Brackettville, Time TBD
25-26 Cabinet Meeting
28 North Sub-Group Charge Conference, Sterling City, Time TBD
29 Andy and Amy – San Antonio – DCOM/BOM Meeting

**West District
Rio Texas Conference
United Methodist Church**

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San Angelo, TX 76903**

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Emails:

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District Web-Page:

www.umcwayoutwest.org