

**The Congregational Church of Austin    United Church of Christ**

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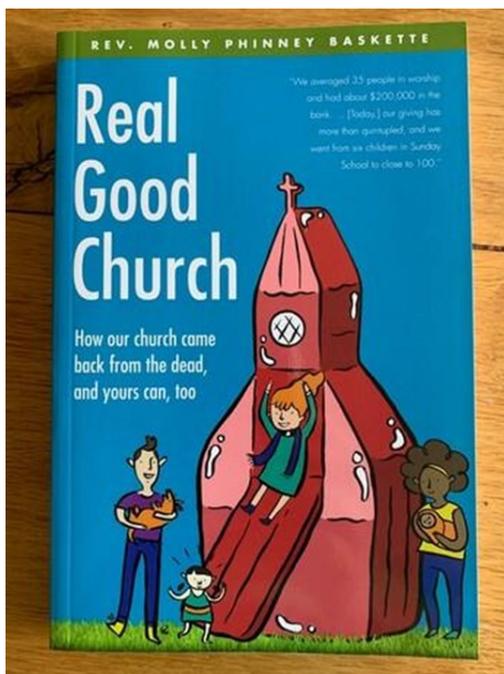
**Rev. Amelia Fulbright, Transitional Pastor**

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## CCA Summer Reading

Dear Members of Friends,

The weather is warming up. Students and teachers are hanging in there for the last few weeks of school, and (hopefully!) the Texas Legislature will be winding down soon. Historically, summer has been a slower time around CCA, but this year we are in the position of some things picking up momentum as we head into June, July, and August. The Coordinating Council is working diligently to finalize the composition of the Settled Pastor Search Committee. At the same time, our Transition Team has begun putting together a draft church profile that will be passed on to the Search Committee to edit and complete. Our Task Force on Property Development is also moving forward in discerning next steps for the future of our buildings and land. All of these streams of activity will gradually flow together toward a unified vision for the next season of ministry at the Congregational Church of Austin. It's an exciting (and also somewhat anxious) time!



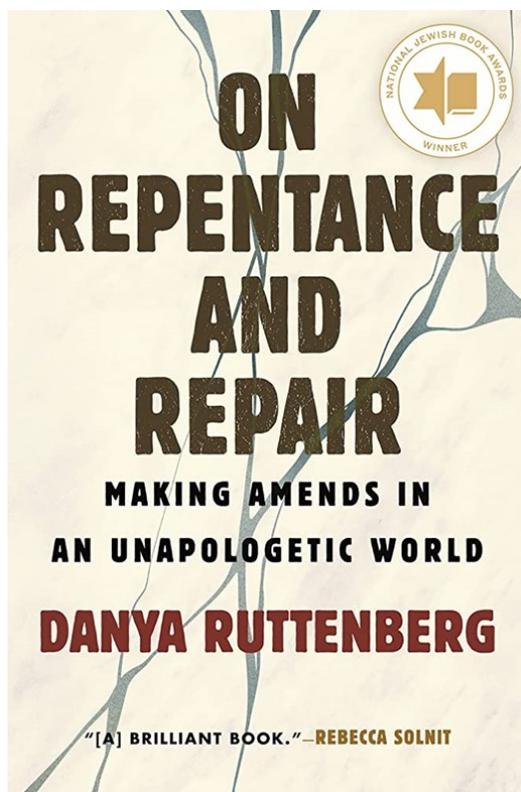
In the spirit of working toward a shared vision for our community, I want to invite you to join me in some summer reading. This is totally optional, of course, but the more we are working with shared vocabulary and concepts, the more likely we are to build consensus around our mission and vision for the future. Here are the titles I'm recommending:

The first is *Real Good Church* by Rev. Molly Phinney Baskette. In this book, Rev. Baskette tells the story of renewal and revitalization at First Church Somerville UCC in Somerville, MA, which she pastored as it came back to life. This is a book about church growth that is rooted in core Christian values like hospitality, generosity, creativity, compassion, justice-seeking, and openness to change, *not* gimmicks and marketing techniques or high pressure evangelism. I love this book because it is a serious story, but Baskette's style is light-hearted, funny, candid, and encouraging along the way. And it is exceedingly practical! You can browse through the table of contents to find chapters on facilities, finances, personnel, conflict—all the things churches must manage well to foster the possibility of real growth and renewal.

At our last Coordinating Council meeting, I invited all the CC members to join me in reading this book, and I'll be inviting our Deacons, Trustees, and Transition Team members to do this, as well. But why not make it a churchwide read? My hope is that sometime in September or October, as the summer heat begins to fade, we can have some conversations about this book, what resonates, and

Cont. on the next page

how we might apply the concepts in our own setting.



The second book is *On Repentance and Repair* by Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg. In June (June 4, 11, and 18), I'm planning to do a series of reflections on this book in worship. The sermons will be accessible even if you haven't read the book, but I think it could add to the experience if you're able to read the full text. Rabbi Ruttenberg has written a profound book based on the teachings of the Jewish scholar Maimonides. The book aims to address a void in our culture, which doesn't offer us much in the way of *how* to practice real repentance and repair for harms done. She even addresses the problem of Christianity's extreme focus on forgiveness as the central ethical demand, without a robust theology for how to make things right when we've done wrong. Judaism has a lot to say about this, and Ruttenberg's book helps us get a handle on how to strike a balance between forgiveness freely given and the ethical demand to be accountable for our actions.

I hope you'll join me in reading (or listening to) one or both of these books, and as always, I'm interested in your thoughts and reflections along the way.

May the peace of Christ be with you,

Pastor Amelia

## June Visitor Deadline June 23, 2022

### Church Leadership

Trustee's Chair	Kevin Dietz
Deacon's Chair	John Goff
Outreach Coordinator	Joy Penticuff
Moderator	Liz Nash
Treasurer	Pam Tucker
Financial Secretary	Jaime Hadley
Children's Sunday School	Kay Pruett
Youth Sunday School	Open
Clerk	Reuel Nash
Historians	Pat & Mel Oakes
Member-at-Large	Bill Beardall
Pastor	Amelia Fulbright
Dir. of Online Ministries	Britt Hicks
Director of Music	Laura Martin

**Personals (cont)**  
**by Pat Oakes**

**P**alm Sunday featured a lively, multi-generational palm-waving procession.



4/2/23 Palm Sunday -- Roberto Hernandez and Xitlali, George (with Irving, his dinosaur) and Vivienne Zercher, and Laura Martin



4/2/23 The Palm Sunday processional

The Saturday evening before Easter, a second group gathered at the home of **Liz** and **Reuel Nash** to watch a very interesting documentary called “The Janes” --about a group of women in Chicago who helped facilitate access to abortions before the passage of **Roe v. Wade**. A group from the church had gathered there several weeks before and the reviews were so good that the **Nashes** scheduled a second showing. Both evenings included time for some early snacks, watching the film, and then enjoying a potluck supper and lively discussion. This fits in with our position as a Reproductive Rights Congregation.



4/8/23 A church gathering at the Nashes to watch the documentary "The Janes" about abortions in Chicago before Roe v. Wade--Whit and Betty Bodman, Mel Oakes--also there were Pat Oakes, Carolyn Thompson and our amazing hosts, the Nashes.

The well-attended Easter Sunday service had a special component. **Radhika Hicks** read her eloquent testimony to the congregation on why she had chosen to be baptized. The tradition of flowering the cross (something brought to us by **Marilyn Vaché** a number of years ago) also was an integral part of the service. The newly organized choir led by **Laura Martin** made its debut to the delight of the whole church. The children hunted Easter Eggs outside while the congregation shared joys and concerns. The usual coffee hour became an Easter brunch with a variety of treats, especially **Lynne Lemley's** delicious scones with berries and cream.



4/9/23 Easter Sunday at church--Amy Harris, Lucy Erda, Sarah Darter, Barbara Burnham, Michael Ross, Roberto Rodriguez, Sara Ross, and Whit Bodman led by Laura Martin; In the pews--Pastor Amelia, Bill Beardall, Sam Innanen, Sophia Espinoza, Radhika Hicks' children, Radhika Hicks, Lynne Lemley

**Personals**  
by Pat Oakes



4/9/23 Easter Sunday at church--Pastor Amelia baptizing Radhika Hicks while Britt Hicks looks on



4/9/23 Easter Sunday at church in front of the flowered cross -- Nikki Darter, Parker Darter Jones (Sarah's grandson), Aaron Jones, Sarah Darter in front of the flowered cross



4/9/23 The Dietz family on Easter Sunday--John, Rachel, Isabella, Francesca, and Kevin

**John Goff** and **Gail Christeson** got to witness the wedding of their son **Cameron** to **Amber Corder** on April 9 in Dripping Springs, Texas – at a lovely wedding venue in the Hill Country. **Cameron** and **Amber** met at the University of Texas, where both became involved with the local chapter of Amigos de las Americas, and cemented their romantic interests when both went to Barcelona, Spain for summer internships. Nearly all the wider **Goff** and **Christeson** family were also in attendance, some from as far away as Germany, and it was a weekend of much fun and merriment. **Cameron** and **Amber** honeymooned in southern Spain, including revisiting the sites of some of their fond memories in Barcelona.



4/9/23 Left-to-right in the photo are sister Megan (who was in the wedding party on the groom's side), Dagmar Stauss (Cameron's step-grandma), Dick Goff (his grandfather on John's side), Amber, Cameron, John, Gail, and John Christeson (his grandfather on Gail's side).

Keep **Joy Penticuff** in your prayers as she recuperates from a mild heart attack (many folks have noted that **Joy** does not do anything mildly, but we are glad that was the diagnosis) and a very serious kidney infection that became septic and spread to her bloodstream. She was in the hospital for four days with an anti-biotic drip. **Joy** is such a hard worker and had been working long hours with Central Texas Interfaith and Huston-Tillotson University getting ready for the second annual HBCU conference which was in early April. It should be noted that **Joy** was instrumental in organizing the first HT-HBCU conference last year. An update as of Sunday, May 30th, with **Joy** participating on-line in joys and concerns, **Joy** tells us she is taking at least a three month leave of absence from her many duties with

## Personals by Pat Oakes

various groups and organizations at church including outreach coordinator, transition team, coordinating council, and trustees. She learned this past week that, while the antibiotic she received in the hospital had worked very well, that the oral ones she was prescribed when she went home did not work effectively on her kidneys and she has suffered a setback which left her feeling pretty ill. A different antibiotic now has her feeling better. **Joy** has vowed to behave herself, but she is hoping that by mid-May she will be cleared to resume some non-strenuous riding of her new horse, Teddy Roosevelt. In the meantime, friends at the barn are riding and looking after him. Please take it easy, **Joy**! If you would like to send her a card, her address is 1707 Enfield Road, Austin, TX, 78703. Husband **Michael** and daughter **Rachel** are definitely looking out for and keeping an eye on her!

**Nodie Murphy** has sung with the San Gabriel Chorale for many years. On Sunday, April 23rd, she was delighted to be singing with them a performance of Rossini's Petite Messe Solennelle at Southwestern University in Georgetown. Since she'll probably be moving to San Antonio soon, this was her "farewell concert." She has certainly enjoyed singing with this classical group and will certainly be missed.

**Ann Locasio** reports, "On April 14, I went on an Austin Duck Adventure with a group of women with whom I regularly hang out. The amphibious vehicle drove all around downtown. The driver was a walking encyclopedia of Austin history, and waving and quacking at bystanders was a hoot. We ended our tour with a splash into Lake Austin near Oyster Landing which contains Hula Hut and Mozart's Coffee. Once on the lake, Driver **Bob** became Captain **Bob** and pointed out the backsides of celebrity homes on the lake (backsides of the homes, not the celebrities). I highly recommend this tour. It's sure to impress any out of town guests you may be having this summer. See me if you want more information. No, I'm not getting paid to promote this tour in case you were wondering."



4/14/23 Ann Locasio enjoyed an unusual tour of Austin-on-Austin Duck Adventures



4/14/23 Ann Locasio enjoying quacking with a friend on Austin Duck Adventures



4/14/23 One of the celebrity homes she saw on the boat part of the tour

**Jen Howicz** has this addition that should have been in last month's Visitor. She says, "Also integral to the planning and hosting of **Dennis Murphy's** memorial reception were **Liz** and **Reuel Nash** (who actually were responsible for a large part of it), **Betty** and **Whit Bodman**, and **Lynne Lemley**. And of course, gratitude to all who celebrated **Dennis's** memory by bringing cookies!"

**Ranae Beeker** touched base last month via e-mail and shared, "Yes, I'm in Bremerton, WA.... across the Puget Sound from Seattle. I retired in April of 2020... the muscular dystrophy has made it to challenging to work....it was challenging to transition, but I have done it.... and am now volunteering for many organizations... and very happy. My son lives with me and is my full-time care giver... I am truly blessed. Volunteering has helped me adjust to being able to give back in spite of the muscular dystrophy.... Crisis Line Counseling is the biggest challenge, but so rewarding as well. As you know, there are so many that need to hear they have value

## Personals by Pat Oakes

and are deserving of support and being loved. Being a Gramma is the best!



4/15/12 Matt Blackstock and Joe McMillan were among the many folks at church who welcomed new member Ranae Beeker as a new member.

as **Clare's** siblings **Katy** and **Greg**. They do not see her as much as **Clare** does which is at least once a week during the school year and more frequently during the summer. **Mary** does not really remember things at all... that she can articulate. She was always so lively and involved in so many political and local issues that that is hard for the family. Her communication skills are diminished to one or two word answers to questions or comments from **Clare** or the associates at Brookdale. She still loves the outdoors—sitting out on **Clare's** back porch or walking around the grounds at Brookdale. She loves watching her great-grandchildren, **Calla Marie Soenen** and **Carver Mathis Soenen**. She enjoyed Easter dinner with her family at **Clare's**—staying longer than usual as she loves being with her great-grandchildren.



4/23 Ranae Beeker's son Gavin and his niece and nephew and Ranae's grandchildren-- Zuzu (4) and Eilif (7) —



4/23 Mary Blackstock at her Brookdale apartment

As the church directory is being updated, folks were wondering how **Mary Blackstock** (widow of longtime member Dr. **Mathis Blackstock**—see photo above) was doing. Thanks to their daughter, **Clare Blackstock Sprinkle**, we now know that **Mary** at 96 is physically doing well, especially since she got a pacemaker in January of 2022. She seems comfortable and content living where she is in a Brookdale facility in the memory unit here in Austin. **Clare** believes she knows who she is as well



4/23 Mary Blackstock with her great-grandchildren Calla Marie Soenen and Carver Mathis Soenen

## Personals by Pat Oakes

**Joan Mueller** reports that she and **Bill** are very happy after their recent move from independent living at Westminster (11 years) to their new apartment in the assisted living section. They have been very happy at Westminster and are enjoying seeing more of their former neighbors in the independent section who moved a while ago to assisted living. She is so pleased with the wonderful care they are receiving. Their grandson **Luke**, who grew up in Austin, earned a degree from George Washington University in policy and economics and is working in the D.C. area. Their granddaughter **Charlotte** is now 3, living in California with her parents and they love doing FaceTime with her every week. The **Mueller's'** new address is 4300 Bull Creek Road, Apt. 114, Austin, TX 78731. They don't make it to church on-line every Sunday but are on remotely sometimes. They also say hello to everyone.

The **Nash** clan began gathering the week before **Annie Nash** and **Sooner Dawsen's** wedding and made it to church on April 16th. Unfortunately, sweet baby **James** arrived from Montreal with a tummy bug which was shared with most of the family members over the week. Folks did the best they could under the circumstances, and everyone enjoyed seeing everyone else. Fortunately, folks were feeling well on the day of the wedding.



4/16/23 Nash family gathering the week before Annie's wedding-- James with his mom Ellie Nash, Reuel Nash, Louise Rodgers, Louis Rodgers with daughter Vivi, Liz Nash

Earth Day 2023 was on Saturday, April 22nd. Another special event was the **Nash-Dawsen** wedding which was held at Wild Onion Ranch in Manchaca, near Austin. **Annie** and **Sooner** had a beautiful wedding surrounded by friends and family. **Reuel** and **Liz** walked **Annie** down the aisle

together and **Ellie** and **Becky** supported her as her matron and maid of honor. **Vivi** made a perfect flower girl, wearing a dress that **Annie** had worn as a flower girl when she was about five. **Annie** and **Sooner** were both beaming with joy the entire night. They couldn't have asked for a better night to celebrate their union. Rev. **Beth Gleason** (the officiant who came all the way from Maine) noted that she had never seen a more beautiful or joyful wedding.



4/22/23 The bride with her attendants--Becky Nash, Allie Harbert, Tiffany Garland, Alli Sargent, Annie Nash with outstanding flower girl Vivi Rodgers, Ellie Nash, Abbie Mahurin, Nicole Harbert, Riley Fitzgerald



4/22/23 The bride Annie Nash greeting her father Reuel

**Personals (cont)**  
by Pat Oakes



4/22/23 Sooner Dawsen with his mom Clemma Dawsen

that is! I'm helping break some age stereotypes for them. My health is a challenge since I have lymphedema and neuropathy in three of my limbs. Exercise and movement help a great deal. I am in remission and grateful for every single day." Stay well, **Beth**—and come back and see us soon.



4/23/23 Beth Gleason visiting from Maine with Barbara Burnham and Pam Tucker after church on Sunday



4/22/23 The wedding of Annie Nash and Sooner Dawsen at Wild Onion Ranch--on the left are Ellie Nash and flower girl Vivi Rodgers who was wearing the dress her Aunt Annie wore when she was flower girl in a wedding when she was about 5

**Frances Holliday Alford** and **Mark Hansel** are really enjoying their new home in Cambridge Towers near the UT campus. **Frances** is busy working on a new altar hanging for the church and has room for creating her beautiful work. She has shared what she is doing with several folks and the piece is really coming along. Incorporated into the altar hanging are symbols that were in the original tapestry which disappeared about 2 years ago during the pandemic and also images from our beautiful stained glass windows.

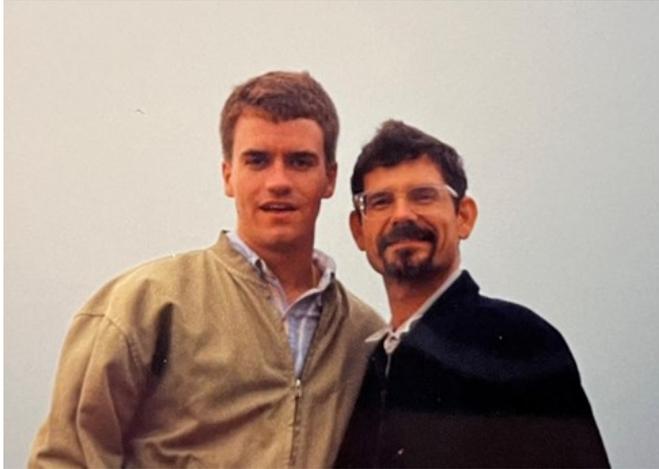


4/24/23 Fabulous fabric artist Frances Holliday Alford is busy working on a new altar hanging for the church

Folks at the service on April 23rd were delighted to say hello to **Beth Gleason** who was here for the wedding of **Annie** and **Sooner** the night before. **Beth** says, "I am doing well, loving my courses in culinary arts and got three A's on my midterms (for three classes)...my midterm in basic culinary skills included a practical test where we had to make the perfect eggs Benedict and get graded by the chef instructor - it's just so much fun! Plus it's also fun to be in school with young people who look at me with curiosity because I'm so 'old', whatever

## Personals (cont) by Pat Oakes

**Stephen Russell** and **Scott Neely** enjoyed a wonderful 30th anniversary celebration with friends in Tucson, AZ, who were with them when **Stephen** and **Scott** met during the 1993 March on Washington for Gay, Lesbian, and Bi Rights and Liberation in Washington DC.



April 1993 Stephen Russell and Scott Neely when they first met at The March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation



4/29/23 John Dietz, McCallum High School junior, shows his pitching form at a game in late April



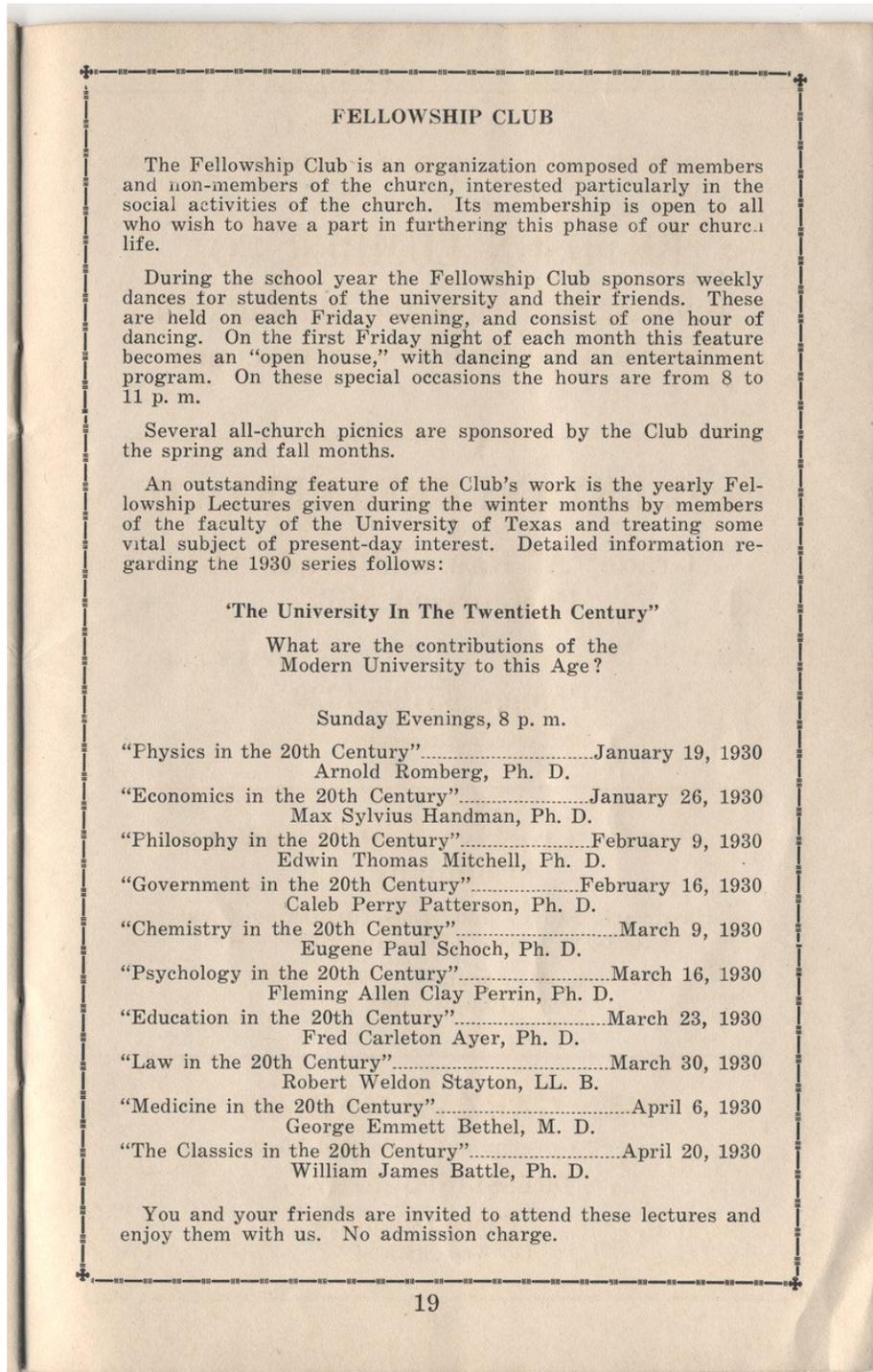
April 25, 2023 Stephen Russell and Scott Neely 30 years later—note that Stephen is wearing his 30-year-old t-shirt

McCallum high school junior John Dietz has had a stellar baseball season this year! As pitcher he has not had any runs scored on him for the entire season—which may be a record for the school. He also plays 3rd and 1st base. The team will be competing in the district playoffs in May. We will have an update in the next Visitor. McCallum Knights are District 24-5A champs! They went undefeated 14-0 and outscored their opponents 181-0 in district play.

## History Corner by Pat & Mel Oakes

There are lots of changes going on in the neighborhood where our church is located—and there are more to come. You might enjoy looking at the church history site and looking for treasures. The site is

<https://www.patandmeloakes.com/PatandMelOakesFamilySite/CCAHistory/>. When you get to the site, look at the Guide to Site which is in the upper left-hand corner and just explore. Here are some interesting examples below.



1/1930 CCA Lecture Series in 1930—the dances mentioned were held in the church basement.

## History Corner by Pat & Mel Oakes, cont.

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Austin American-Statesman  
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Construction of an educational building containing eight classrooms and one or two apartments and the addition of a steeple to the church are planned by the congregation of the Congrega-

tional Church of Austin located at 408 West 23rd Street. Architect is Richard Swallow, instructor in architecture at The University of Texas. The Rev. **John Towery** is pastor of the church.

4/27/1965 Austin-American Statesman The two apartments never materialized (zoning issues, I think) and the steeple was never built