

# THE VISITOR

September 2024

## The Congregational Church of Austin    United Church of Christ

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### Rev. Ginny Brown Daniel, Interim Pastor

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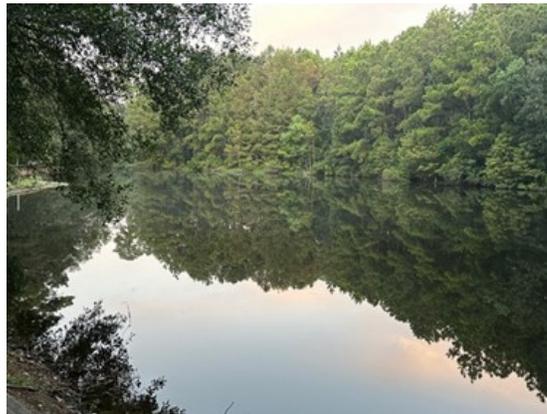
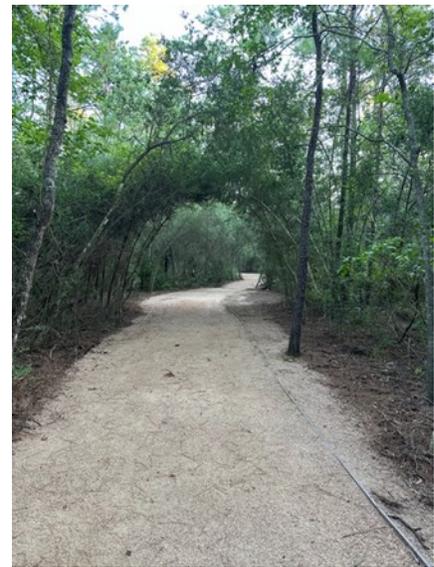
**D**uring one of the hottest weeks of the summer, I decided to join a walking club in the Woodlands. Even the club leader questioned my decision on one early Saturday morning when we met to walk 6 miles! I told her I'm a southern girl and love all things heat and humidity! Okay, so I may have been exaggerating but sometimes you have to fake it till you make it, right? Here's what I have learned when walking at 6 am:

- Night owls, who are definitely not morning people (ME) need time and space to wake up and clear the fog out of weary brains. I am grateful to have a path to walk, music or news to listen to, and the ability to move my body, mind, and soul until I'm fully awake.
- Water and a washcloth are essential to keep hydrated as well as wiping my face free from sweat.
- There is nothing better than the serenity of nature early in the morning!
- I LOVE darkness! Walking in safe areas with enough light from the street and my clip-on light provide enough illumination to navigate in the beauty of darkness.
- It's good to take a day off in order to rest. I usually practice yoga on those days to balance everything out!
- My walking journey during the week includes an amazing nature trail near my house that is in the same area as the Exxon-Mobil global headquarters. Sigh. The irony is not lost on me that the serenity of nature I love has been created by the leading oil and gas company doing irreparable harm to the serenity of nature in other communities (especially impoverished communities of color).
- The Divine speaks to me in the bold colors of sunrises as well as the subtle movement of water and creatures all around me – if I just slow down and become more aware.

Here are a few pictures from my morning walks. I often hold you in my spirit as I walk: praying for you, thinking about the day or season ahead, and opening myself to Divine Wisdom so that I may lead you more authentically. How do you pray for the Congregational Church of Austin? May we do so with a deep awareness of God's bold colors and presence within and around us.

Blessings,  
Ginny

Photos cont. on the next page



**October Visitor Deadline September 23, 2024**

### **Church Leadership**

- |                             |                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Trustee's Chair             | John Goff          |
| Deacon's Chair              | 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    |
| Newsletter Personals Editor | Pat Oakes          |
| Member-at-Large             | Bill Beardall      |
| Pastor                      | Ginny Brown Daniel |
| Dir. of Online Ministries   | Sergio Martinez    |
| Director of Music           | Laura Martin       |

## Personals by Pat Oakes

**L**aura Martin, our church music director reports, "On a hot Saturday evening, August 10th, members of CCA had the great joy of marching in the 2024 Austin Pride Parade! University United Methodist Church graciously invited us to join their float and were exceptionally welcoming. Local drag queen **Aria Ray** performed on the beautiful float decorated with organ pipes and butterflies. **Roberto** and **Jonathan Hernandez-Geer** donated their truck and time to drive the float and were absolutely amazing! We had a blast walking and dancing together down Congress in front of the State Capitol, celebrating the LGBTQI+ community in Austin."



8/10/24 Folks from UUMC and CCA marched in the Austin Pride parade



8/10/24 Laura Martin, Jonathan Geer and Ginny Brown Daniel marching in the Austin Pride parade

**Reuel Nash**, now three times a grandfather, met **Henry Thomas William Nash Rodgers**, son of **Ellie Nash** and **Louis Rodgers** who was born on July 26th in Montreal. He weighed 8 lbs, 2 oz. **Reuel** and **Liz** had traveled back to Texas from the Berkshires for a **Nash** family reunion and were driving back to their new summer home in the Berkshires with their animals when he was born. **Becky** and **Liz** got to drive up to Montreal around Aug 6th to meet "**Huck**," as **Reuel** stayed behind to take care of the animals. Then **Reuel** got to go to Montreal August 14th with **Liz** staying behind in the Berkshires. Daughter **Becky** pointed out there is quite a size differential between **Huck** and **Reuel**.



8/24 Grampa Reuel with new grandson Huckleberry (aka Huck) Rodgers

In July, **Carolyn Thompson** and her daughter, **Florence**, made a quick trip to Houston to see *The Lion King*, a traveling Broadway musical. **Carolyn** says it was a magical experience! The life size puppets and costumes were amazing, the set and lighting recreated the African landscape, the singing and acting were superb. They really felt transported to the vibrant land of the lions. After the Sunday matinee they treated themselves to an awesome dining experience at Brennan's. It was a weekend experience that felt like a two-week vacation! **Carolyn's** granddaughter **Emily**, a junior at Reed College in Portland, OR came for a visit with her grandmother in August. **Emily** is majoring in Environmental Studies with a focus on History. She loves art - seeing it and doing it - but **Carolyn** does not think it is part of her degree plan. **Emily** really enjoyed their time at the Blanton Art Museum. She said it was large enough to be quite interesting but small enough to see it all in one visit. **Carolyn** also celebrated **Emily's** birthday with her, they ate good Mexican food, and they went to Jerry's Artarama so

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

**Emily** could stock up on quality art supplies and enjoyed leisurely breakfasts in the dining hall where **Carolyn** lives.

**Nodie Murphy** and her San Antonio family (daughter **Sarah** and her husband **Larbi Sennour** and two of their kids, **Dehbia** and **Ryan**) enjoyed a wonderful (both flights were on time!) quick trip (Aug.3rd—6th) to Shoreview, MN (actually St. Paul). They had two beautiful days sandwiching a rainy day in between visiting **Nodie's** son **Ned** (aka **Ben**) and his wife **Faye** and their two children—**James** 8 1/2 and **Adalyn** 5 1/2. They had wonderful conversations, watched some of the Olympics, and enjoyed a tea party with **Nodie's** younger grandchildren.



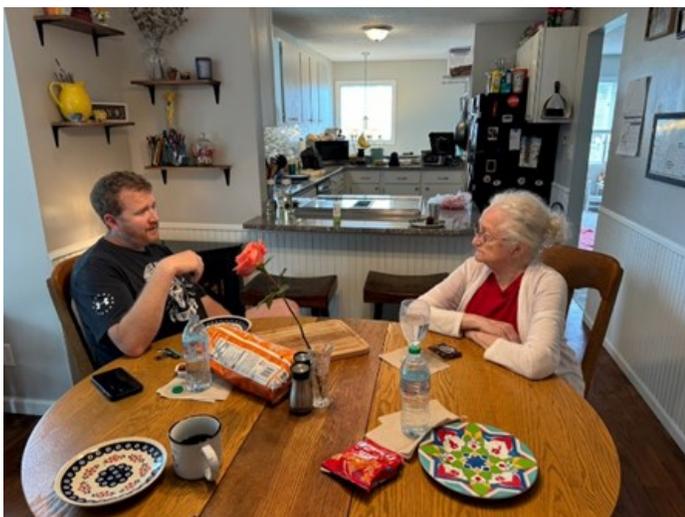
8/6/24 Nodie flanked by Ned and Faye's two children Adalyn, 5 1/2 and James, 8 1/2



8/6/24 Ned and Nodie in front of Ned and Faye's home—Faye has put in some vegetables in a garden in the front yard



8/4/24 Watching the Olympics in the downstairs family room—Ryan, Dehbia, Larbi, Adalyn, and James



8/3/24 Ned and Nodie having a good visit

**Lynn Chavarria** is hoping to see folks in church by mid-September after having her (2nd) knee replaced on July 29th. Her PT has been going well, especially as she concentrated on working to be as strong as she could before the surgery. She is walking well with a cane but finds that going up or down slopes is very challenging. Her son **James**, who is a computer programmer in Lafayette, Indiana, came and stayed for two weeks. He worked remotely from **Lynn's** and helped with all of the cooking and the household chores. **Lynn** is now back on her own but has enjoyed some good visits with her granddaughter **Maureen (aka Mo) McGovern** who is a sophomore at LASA here in Austin.

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

In late July **Stephen Russell** visited family in North Carolina. He gave a talk at First Congregational UCC of Asheville on "Understanding and Supporting Today's LGBTQ+ Youth". His father **Rollin Russell** recently completed a period as interim minister for the congregation. It was a notable experience to speak in an audience that included his father, both sisters, and both of their husbands.



7/24 Pictured here at the Asheville church: Michael Finch, Rollin Russell, Amy Russell (Finch), Bethany (Russell) Baker, Stephen Russell, and Joe Baker.

The **Harris family (John and Warinda, their sons, Alden and William, and Warinda's mom Barbara Johnson)** are finally getting past the stage of getting everything unpacked in June and are getting nicely settled into their new home in late August in Manchaca TX. **Warinda** says, "There were boxes everywhere! **John** and I both have been more out of town than in, so it has been slow going but we are enjoying it! **Mama** loves her new space—lots of light and a window from which she can keep an eye on things! She's going to become the **Gladys Kravitz** (remember "Bewitched"?) of the neighborhood."

**Sarah Darter** writes, "I just felt like taking a lot of pictures at church on July 28. Then I found out a few days later that **Ginny's** birthday was coming up. I decided to make a collage and use the pictures from that particular Sunday. I found a little graphic in a book that showed a church outline, and was able to make little teeny tiny pictures of people to fit into the windows of the church. Then I cut and pasted other photos showing people and things that are central and important to us in our worship space. It was a three day project that gave me a great deal of pleasure. I'm pretty busy between my massage practice and developing a business with LifeWave patches - so to do art was really special. When you make art, you're always ...well, OK, I'm always worried that it'll look goofy to other people. But I was hoping it was pleasing to our folks and especially Ginny. I made greeting

cards of the framed collages picture to give to people in church. If you want one, let me know. I have about half a dozen left."



7/28/24 The Easter cross with a rainbow stole



7/28/24 We just started a new prayer net—lots of prayers to go!



7/28/24 Prayer ties, the baptismal bowl, and prayer ties for the prayer net

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



7/28/24 Pastor Ginny Brown Daniel



7/28/24 John Goff running the technology



7/28/24 Pastor Ginny Brown Daniel with Roberto Hernandez lighting the candles

**Andrea Haksoon Low** wrote in mid-August, "I just returned from a week in San Diego. I saw my brother, his daughter, and her family. It was the first time I met my five year-old grandnephew, who started kindergarten on 8/12/24 while I was there, and my 2 1/2 year-old grandniece. They ate a lot of sushi at the all-you-can-eat restaurant. They run around and talk a lot, too. It's a good thing that my niece was a Navy officer, and my brother was a Marine - they were able to climb rope ladders with the kids. My niece's husband and I didn't even try to keep up. I also saw a friend with whom I worked at the Federal Election Commission in Washington, D.C., 30 years ago. He became weary of life as a lawyer in D.C., so he relocated to San Diego to buy/sell real estate and run a B&B. Good move. I met up with 2 childhood friends - one lives in Honolulu and was in San Diego for a public radio conference, the other commutes between Portland, Oregon, and San Diego, where she hopes to retire.



Here we are at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in La Jolla. I'm trying to blend in with the Warhol."

On a very warm Sunday, August 18th, we shortened our service a bit so we could have some snacks and get hydrated in preparation for our field trip. Eleven of us (led by **Bill Beardall**) walked south on San Antonio St. for 2 1/2 blocks to take a look at the new development at St. Austin's Catholic Church. We were joined by 25-30 folks from University Presbyterian church. The dedication of the new facilities was on August 11th. Our guide was **Christopher Kennedy**, a member of St Austin Catholic Church, a leader of the St. Austin redevelop-

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

ment project, and a consultant to the redevelopment initiatives at CCA and UPC. The new building that we toured is six stories, with two floors devoted to the St. Austin Catholic School (pre-K through eighth grade) with three floors built out for church offices, fellowship, church activities, a gym, and rectory with one floor left undeveloped for future expansion. Adjacent to the six story church/school building, fronting on San Antonio St., is a 27-story student housing high rise - still under construction - which will accommodate 990 student beds total, 200 of which will be reserved for lower-income students at affordable housing rates. It was a very interesting field trip giving us much food for thought as we continue with our plans for the future redevelopment of our church property.



8/18/24 Bill Campbell and Bill Beardall touring the library at the new St. Austin's school facility--Carolyn Thompson, center left, Michael Ross, 2nd from the right

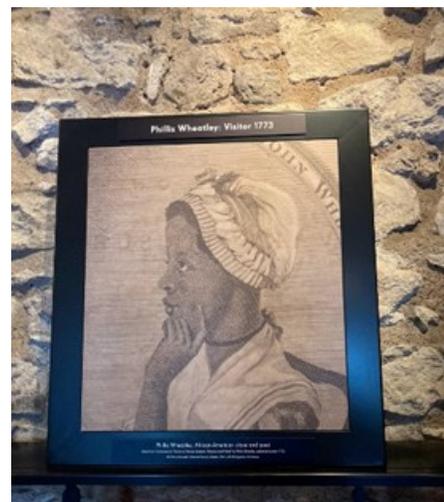


8/18/24 Michael Ross, Ginny Brown Daniel, and Sara Ross in the music classroom at Saint Austin's new school facility on San Antonio

The Women's Book Club recently read a wonderful biography of **Phyllis Wheatley**—THE ODYSSEY OF **PHYLLIS WHEATLEY: A POET'S JOURNEY THROUGH SLAVERY AND INDEPENDENCE** by **David Waldstreicher**. **Betty Bodman**, a book club member, shares, "While **Whit** and I were visiting the Tower of London in July, there was an historical enactment that we stumbled across. One of the characters was **Phillis Wheatley**. Her visit to London in 1773 was included in the history they were telling. We took a picture of the plaque, which mentions her. With the very long history of the Tower, and its many facets, I thought it was interesting that they were including **Wheatley's** visit as a story worth telling. We didn't get the whole sense of it, but I think it had to do with including a perspective of how slavery was viewed at the time."



8/18/24 Checking out the new library at St. Austin's -- ?, Michael Ross, Stephen Russell, Warinda Harris, and Ginny Brown Daniel



7/24 Whit and Betty Bodman were most interested to see this portrait of Phyllis Wheatley at the Tower of London during an historical reenactment

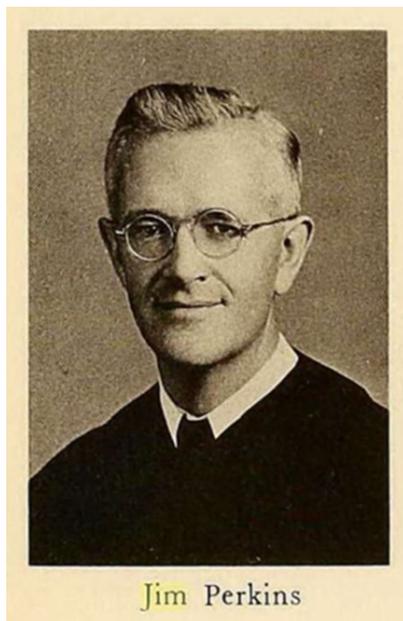
## History Corner by Pat & Mel Oakes

Some of you may remember Rev. Dr. **James Crosswell Perkins** (1905-1980) and his wife **Evangeline Perkins** (1905-1993) who joined our church in 1962. Dr. **Perkins** was Head of the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Huston-Tillotson 1957-1970. **Mel** wrote up an illustrated section about them in the church history on the website. Their daughter **Priscilla Crosswell Grew** is a geologist who retired in Lincoln after a career at the University of Nebraska. She has sent us the following note for the History Corner.

In 1949, Rev. **Perkins** was minister of the First Congregational Church on Carolina Street in San Antonio. Designed by the British Architect **Alfred Giles** to recall the Leyden houses of the Pilgrims, the historic 1916 red brick “Giles Church” since 1982 has housed the Saint Anthony the Great Orthodox Church. Jim Perkins graduated from Princeton with highest honors in Philosophy in 1929, then earned his B.D. and his Masters in Sacred Theology at Oberlin with a 1933 thesis on The Ethics of Jesus and the Plight of the Coal Miners, based on his 21 visits to the Hocking Valley District in southern Ohio in 1932-1933. **Jim** was a great admirer of **Albert Schweitzer**, and his favorite **Schweitzer** book from Princeton days was the 1911 London edition of The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of its Process from Reimarus to Wrede. **Evangeline Perkins** was in the Class of 1936 at Oberlin Conservatory but was not able to complete her degree due to a near fatal case of pneumonia her senior year. She and **Jim** got married in 1938. As they served small churches, she was the pianist, organist, choir director and chose the music!

So when the news came that there would be a Goethe Bicentennial Convocation and Music Festival June 27-July 16, 1949, in Aspen, Colorado, in a canvas tent designed by the Finnish-American architect **Eero Saarinen**, to be attended by **Albert Schweitzer** and writers **Thornton Wilder** and **Jose Ortega y Gasset**, plus a festival of music featuring the Minneapolis Symphony with **Dimitri Mitropoulos**, pianist **Artur Schnabel**, violinist **Nathan Milstein**, cellist **Gregor Piatigorsky**, and opera star **Jerome Hines**-- **Jim Perkins** was determined to take his family to Aspen! They stayed at the T Lazy Seven guest ranch where **Priscilla**, age 8, could go horseback riding. As if the Goethe Bicentennial were not enough, the summer of 1949 also featured also featured the on-location filming of the **Michael Mann** movie “Devil’s Doorway” starring **Robert Taylor**. The highlight for **Priscilla** was getting to sit on **Robert Taylor’s** horse on set.

**Pat** and **Mel’s** daughter **Beth** was christened in 1967 with the name **Elizabeth Alden Oakes**. After the service, Dr. **Perkins** asked where the **Alden** name had come from. **Pat** shared that the name was for her beloved Uncle **Alden**, but that Pilgrims **John** and **Priscilla Alden** were her ancestors—at which point Dr. **Perkins** said, “Hello, Cousin!” The Pilgrim **Alden’s** had 10 children who all survived and reproduced and now there are approximately 1 million descendants! **Pat** and **Priscilla** consider themselves to be cousins to this day.

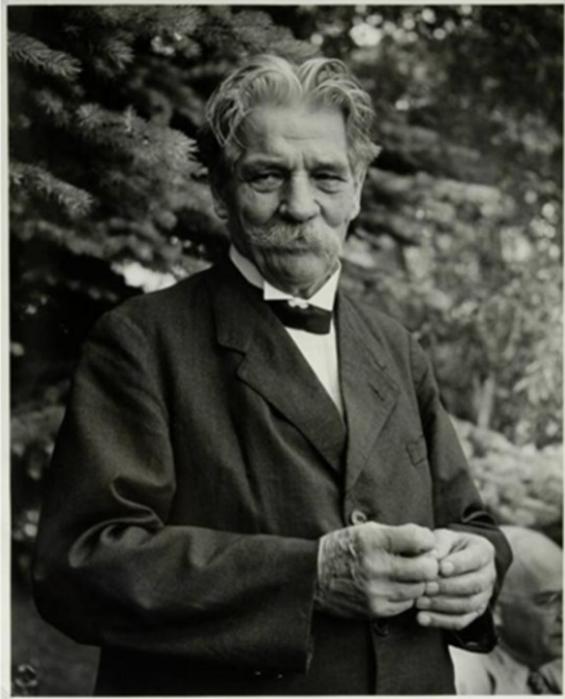


Jim Perkins in 1949

# History Corner by Pat & Mel Oakes, cont.



Montage clockwise: anniversary program, Priscilla in the music tent, T Lazy 7 Homestead lodge, overgrown dirt road to Devil's Doorway movie set



Albert Schweitzer in 1949