

## TRANSITIONS...A message from your President, Linda Ice

**December 2013**

Well, this is the “lull” in this time of transition that we’ve been waiting for! And that is not a bad thing! We said our goodbyes to Russell and Gayle in the most meaningful ways possible and now the wheels are in full motion for us to begin the search for an Interim Minister as well as a contract minister. Rest assured, *Westside is alive and well!*

- Attendance numbers remain strong for our Sunday morning activities
- We added four new members and six very interested prospective members at the most recent Exploring Membership class
- Several attended the NTUUC Fall Retreat in Glen Rose
- The auction was “*wildly successful*” ☺
- Your Worship Team and specifically, Erin Smutz, have been working hard to secure interesting guest speakers to fill our pulpit for the next several months! We have a nice variety of speakers including several UU ministers, community speakers representing a variety of faith traditions, and some of our own Westside members who have wonderful Reflections to share
- All committees and interest groups are “up and running”
- We are gathering supplies to fill many Thanksgiving baskets for SCAC and will begin fulfilling Angel Tree wish lists very soon

And this is just a short list of all the reasons to say that we are *alive and well!!!!* Things may feel different at this time, but the energy, enthusiasm and loving generosity continues to fill the life of our church community! We hope you are continuing to be a part!

The Interim Task Force held their organizational meeting on October 16<sup>th</sup> and selected Mark McMurry as Chair and Andrea Petty as Secretary. They reviewed the schedule of deadlines for submission of applications and information to secure an accredited UUA Interim Minister. They will be meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday evening of each month.

It might be a good time to remind you that during this entire transitions process there will be two committees charged with seeking our ministerial leadership. The first is this Interim Task Force. Appointed by the board, they will develop our application packet to send to the UUA. The UUA will match our packet to those of accredited ministers seeking a position and then we will make a selection from those who appear to be a “good fit”. The Interim Minister should be in place by September of 2014.

At some point during the Interim Process, we will be forming the Ministerial Search Committee. The board will be create a slate of 10 church members whose names will be put before the congregation for a vote. Of the 10, we will elect 5 – 6 members to fulfill the responsibilities to seek our next settled minister.

The Interim Task Force will also be developing a job description, salary package, and application for the search of a contract minister. This is the short term, limited responsibility position that the board has decided to seek to cover some of the vacant period of time without ministerial leadership at Westside. We would likely not have

someone begin before March or April, but that is yet to be determined as well. The ITF will be working with the Finance Committee as well to make the most sound financial decisions for the church.

The Long Range Planning Committee, under the leadership of Joy Counts, has been working very hard to create a comprehensive survey which will provide an updated profile of our congregation. The survey will be presented to the members of the congregation late in January for individual completion. Results will be published later in the spring or early summer. This profile will then be the foundation for collaborative efforts and dialogue within the congregation as we develop the next long range plan for our church. We are taking this whole project slowly and deliberately. The tentative goal for completion of the long range plan is summer of 2015. So, we are trying to be very thoughtful in the creation of this plan to meet the needs and desires of our growing congregation!