Welcome...A Word from Our Executive Director

The start of a new year is always so exciting—new faces, returning families, and the sound of happy children through the halls. The first few days have been filled with smiling faces. For children who have a bit of trouble transitioning into school, our teachers are always here to help and give suggestions or guidance. My hope is that your children are coming home fulfilled and returning each day eager to be here.

Keep an eye out each month for our newsletter because it is filled with information about upcoming events and happenings around the school. The school wants to work in partnership with parents, so communication is important to us. Part of the partnership involves providing opportunities for parents to learn right along with their children. In order to do this, I have several parent education events scheduled throughout the fall and spring semesters. The first parent education event is with a well-known early childhood educator, Carol Katrana. She will address many areas of parenting and child growth and development, so please make plans to attend.

I hope everyone has had an opportunity to meet Amy Francis, the Director. If you have not, please stop by and say hello or look for her in the halls. The school year is off to a great start. Thank you for the privilege of working with your children and family.

Blessings,
Jerri Tetrault
Greetings from Our New Director, Amy Francis

Hello Family and Friends of MDUMC Weekday School.

I recently came on board to serve in the exciting, interesting and constantly entertaining job of the Director of this amazing program.

All of my jobs from age sixteen on up have involved young children, whether it was babysitting for every family in the neighborhood, working in a drop-in day care or volunteering in the pediatric wing of Memorial City hospital. It was from my early days that I fell in love with children—how they learn, how they play, how they develop.

At Stephen F. Austin State University, I studied Speech-Language Pathology with a focus on pediatric Speech and Language, how it develops and the design of the speech structure. While pursuing Speech and Language studies, I also pursued Early Childhood intervention. The program introduced me to the amazing capacity of the young child to learn, something I had witnessed but never studied.

I continued on at S.F.A. to get my Masters degree in Education with an emphasis in Early intervention, which involved extensive study in young children, their development and the ways to perform intervention with developmental delays and concerns.

For the past eleven years, I have been working within my chosen field and falling more in love with children and their development. I started off as a Child Development Specialist for an Early Childhood Intervention program, where I would go into the homes of families and work with young children with developmental delays. I worked also for a year as a Life Skills teacher for children with severe disabilities.

During the last five years, I gained varied experiences at Neighborhood Centers Inc., Houston’s largest Head Start/ Early Head Start program; I also worked as a teacher mentor/trainer, and served as their educational coordinator, purchasing curricula and monitoring the ongoing assessment of almost 2000 children.

I am so excited about this new opportunity—to get the chance to really know all of the families and children in this program and to grow together. I hope I get to meet everyone soon!

Amy Francis
Director MDUMC Weekday School
Places to Go—Places to Climb...Our New Toddler Playground is here!

This past year, the talented and tireless Parent Council volunteers at the Weekday School led the charge to raise more than $20,000 to build a new toddler playground. Because of the thoughtfulness, work, and creativity of these volunteers and all of our supportive and generous families, the new playground was installed in August. Our youngest students have already begun enjoying all of its nooks and crannies, and bells and whistles. Located in the courtyard, just outside the Church Nursery, this place is now available for all our little ones to enjoy. Stop by to take a peek or visit the Weekday School website to see photos of the new equipment: http://www.mdumcweekdayschool.org/parentcouncil.html.

This year the funds raised by our Parent Council will be directed towards our family events (e.g., Rodeo Round-up and Spring Fling) and teacher appreciation and development. Some of the fundraising projects this year include the student directory, playground pictures and a Fall and Spring Dinners Out at Chuck E Cheese (dates TBD). Ads for the student directory are currently on sale. If you are interested in purchasing an ad for the school directory, please contact Lara Ryan at beauand-lara@comcast.net or visit the school office.
Do you have a few gently-used items to donate?

Our pre-school teachers would like to add a few more options to their dramatic play centers. If you have any costumes (especially sizes 2-6T) that your children have outgrown (or if you expect a post-Halloween purge of some of these items), our teachers would be extremely grateful to add your donations to their classroom collections.

The Creative After-School Program (CAP) would also welcome a gently-used microwave to use during their Cooking Club days. Their old microwave just broke down.

We sincerely thank all of you for your support of the Weekday School and its programs. If you have any questions or would like to donate an item, stop by or call our offices. We are pleased to provide receipts for all donations.

Fall Box Tops Fun

Make a Difference for Our School with Box Tops

Please clip and save Box Top coupons - each one is worth 10 cents for our school! Box Tops can be found on hundreds of quality products from brands like these: General Mills, Pillsbury, Betty Crocker, Ziploc, Kleenex and Hefty. (For a complete list of participating brands visit www.boxtops4education.com.) The Fall collection will take place from Oct. 2 through Oct. 16, so look for the pink collection boxes outside your classrooms during those weeks. The class that collects the most Box Tops from each age group will win a popsicle party!! Special thanks to all those who helped us jump start the year by turning in their collections to the office over the Summer..
Parent Council 2009-2010 Calendar

SEPTEMBER
September 3  Parent Council Meeting 9:15 am

OCTOBER
October 1   Parent Council Meeting, 9:15 am
October 5-8  BOOK FAIR

NOVEMBER
November 5  Parent Council Meeting, 9:15 am
November 6  Fall Teacher Appreciation Bruncheon
November 19  TIS THE SEASON

DECEMBER
December 3  Parent Council Meeting, 9:15 am
December 7  Sharing Shoeboxes (Chapel)
December 11  Sharing Shoeboxes (Chapel)

JANUARY
January 7   Parent Council Meeting, 9:15 am

FEBRUARY
February 11  Parent Council Meeting, 9:15 am
February 25  RODEO ROUND-UP

MARCH
March 4    Parent Council Meeting, 9:15 am

APRIL
April 8   Parent Council Meeting, 9:15 am
April 30  SPRING FLING

MAY
May 6    Parent Council Meeting, 9:15 am
May 10  Food & Diaper Drive (Chapel)
May 14  Food & Diaper Drive (Chapel)
May 30  TEACHER APPRECIATION BRUNCH
“The ABCs of Parenting Preschoolers”

This Parent Education opportunity organized by the MDUMC Weekday School features Carol Katrana, author of *The ABCs of Parenting Preschoolers*, a consideration of what preschoolers need to thrive. From A to Z, this mother and former preschool administrator, addresses such vital strategies as: “Affirm. Be. Create. Dig. Emotions. Follow. Gifts. Humble. Intelligence. Job...”

September 30, 2009, D126
9:15-10:15 a.m.

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**Safe Sanctuary Training**

This training session is available to all parents but **REQUIRED** for all those who want to help with **Pre-K Field-trips**. MDUMC and The Weekday School are committed to making every child’s experience while in our care as safe, caring, and loving as possible.

**Thursday, Sept. 10**
9:15-10:15 a.m.

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**Fall Teacher Appreciation Bruncheon**

Save the Date for The Fall Teacher Appreciation Bruncheon on Friday, November 6th from 10 – 1. This event is generously organized and sponsored by the Parent Council, which is encouraging everyone to sign up to bring an item for the brunch or to make a donation toward the table decorations and movie-themed favors. Contact: Emily Wolf at emily.y.wolf@mac.com.
Destination Book Fair: Read Around the World

Plan to join us at the Weekday School’s Fall Book Fair!

**Tuesday, October 6**
8:30 a.m.– 6:00 p.m.
Family Event
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, October 7**
8:30 a.m.– 6:00 p.m.

**Thursday, October 8**
8:30 a.m.– 12 noon

Sales on Tuesday and Wednesday will be **tax free**. Come browse and buy. Proceeds will benefit the Weekday School. If you’d like to help with the Book Fair, please contact Julie Cooper (kmcooper89@aol.com or 832-358-9530) or Robin Parker (rparker93@comcast.net or 281-556-5629).

Tuition Express: An Easy, Safe Way to Make Tuition Payments
by Diana Calhoun, Weekday School Accountant

Just a reminder to those families who have not yet taken advantage of Tuition Express – It’s not too late!

Tuition Express is safe, secure and ensures your tuition payment will be made on time every month. Visit [www.tuitionexpress.com](http://www.tuitionexpress.com) and download the form for Electronic Transfer (no credit card payments available at this time.) Then bring the completed form and a voided check to the office. In 2-3 weeks, your account will be ready for automatic payments. Those payments will occur on the 6th of each month, after you have had time to receive and review your monthly statement. And you can discontinue this payment method at any time simply by notifying me. If you have any questions, please contact me at dianacalhoun@mdumc.org.
New Laws About Seat Belts, Car Seats & Cell Phones

Parents should be aware of some new laws effective September 1, 2009.

- EVERYONE in a vehicle is now required to wear a seatbelt, regardless of position within the vehicle or age.
- Any child younger than the age of 8 (unless he/she is taller than 4’ 9”) is required to be secured in an approved car seat while riding in a car.
- The use of a hand-held cellphone while driving through an active school zone is now prohibited and subject to a $200 fine. The law does not apply if a vehicle is stopped or a hands-free device is being used.

Mom’s Group Forming—A Note from the UMW Circle

It is not too late to get in on the ground floor of the new United Methodist Women’s Circle. The group’s first meeting is at the Church on Tuesday, September 8, at 9:30 a.m. in room D126. This group is primarily comprised of mothers with young children, up through elementary age. In addition to offering a fellowship opportunity, the meeting will address the many opportunities to serve others through the UMW. A nursery will be provided. If you have questions, please contact Melissa Evans at 713-722-7805. Future meetings will be held October 20 at The Refuge, November 10 and December 8 in Room D126.
**City Council Public Meetings**

Public sessions begin Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m.

Regular City Council meetings begin on Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m.

- **Tuesday, September 1, 8, 15, 22, 29**
- **Wednesday, September 2, 9, 16, 23, 30**

City Hall, 900 Bagby, 2nd floor, 713-247-1840

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**Houston Happenings**

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<th>EVENTS</th>
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<td><strong>September 3</strong>&lt;br&gt;Rockapella Goes Retro&lt;br&gt;Houston Symphony&lt;br&gt;Woodlands Pavilion</td>
<td>Miller Outdoor Theater&lt;br&gt;100 Concert Drive&lt;br&gt;713-284-8352</td>
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<td><strong>September 4-6</strong>&lt;br&gt;Houston Symphony Pops—Hits from the 60s &amp; 70s&lt;br&gt;Jones Hall</td>
<td>Museum of Fine Arts&lt;br&gt;1001 Bissonnet&lt;br&gt;713-639-7300</td>
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<td><strong>September 6</strong>&lt;br&gt;Bollywood Blast 2009&lt;br&gt;Miller Theater</td>
<td>Museum of Natural Science&lt;br&gt;1 Hermann Circle Drive&lt;br&gt;713-639-IMAX</td>
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<td><strong>September 8-20</strong>&lt;br&gt;Grease&lt;br&gt;TUTS—Hobby Center</td>
<td>Reliant Arena&lt;br&gt;South Loop 610 @Kirby exit&lt;br&gt;713-629-3700</td>
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<td><strong>September 10-20</strong>&lt;br&gt;Houston Ballet—Manon&lt;br&gt;Wortham Center</td>
<td>Stages Theatre&lt;br&gt;3201 Allen Parkway&lt;br&gt;713-527-0123</td>
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<td><strong>September 18-20</strong>&lt;br&gt;Texas Home &amp; Garden Show&lt;br&gt;Reliant Park</td>
<td>Toyota Center&lt;br&gt;1510 Polk&lt;br&gt;1-866-4-HOUTIX</td>
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<td><strong>September 18-20</strong>&lt;br&gt;Fall Antique Show&lt;br&gt;Convention Center</td>
<td>Verizon Wireless Theater&lt;br&gt;520 Texas in Bayou Place&lt;br&gt;713-230-1600</td>
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<td><strong>September 23</strong>&lt;br&gt;Swing, Jive &amp; Pop into Dance&lt;br&gt;Miller Theatre</td>
<td>Woodlands Pavilion&lt;br&gt;2005 Lake Robbins&lt;br&gt;281-363-3300</td>
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<td><strong>September 29</strong>&lt;br&gt;Painting the Cosmos: Science and the Art of Frederic Edwin Church&lt;br&gt;MFAH</td>
<td>Wortham Center&lt;br&gt;501 Travis&lt;br&gt;713-522-5538</td>
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<td><strong>September 29-October 11</strong>&lt;br&gt;Meet Me in St. Louis&lt;br&gt;Hobby Center</td>
<td><em>For More Houston Happenings, visit <a href="http://cbtcws.cityofhouston.gov/events/Events.aspx">http://cbtcws.cityofhouston.gov/events/Events.aspx</a></em></td>
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**COMING UP IN OCTOBER**

- **October 6-16**: Box Top Collection
- **October 6-8**: Book Fair
- **October 14**: Parent Education: Toilet Training
- **October 20-22**: Vision/Hearing Screens
- **October 26 & 30**: Halloween Chapels & Parades

“The Newsletter” is a monthly publication of Memorial Drive United Methodist Church’s Weekday School
12955 Memorial Drive, Houston, Texas 77079  713-425-6804
Questions? Email jerritetrault@mdumc.org

*Jerri Tetrault, Director*