

Wilshire
BAPTIST CHURCH

July 28, 2024

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Preparing for worship

This past week has been a busy one for me, and I doubt I'm the only one. Between travel, errands, work, camps, visiting family and friends, shopping for school supplies and trying to maintain some semblance of a routine, summer can be exhausting.

I find that the busier I get, the less time I spend on spiritual practices that help me feel connected to God. Prayer, journaling, meditation and reading Scripture seem easy to cut out of my schedule in order to fit more classes, jobs, trips and time with friends. But, ironically, the times we feel too busy to take time to connect with God are often the times we need God's sustaining power the most.

One reason coming to church each Sunday remains important to me is because physically showing up is one way I can reach out and allow God to dwell in me. I know that worship helps me feel connected to my community, to God and even to myself, so I make a point to block out an hour in my schedule and scurry to get all of my ducks in a row on Sunday mornings. Sometimes I have to sneak in a few minutes late. But once I'm here, I can stop. Be still. Breathe.

The pew gives me the space I need to rest — my body, my mind and my soul. There's a reason we call it the "Sanctuary" — the busyness of the world seems to pause as I sit in this space. Some days I connect deeply with the elements of worship and the people around me. Other days I just sit and let everything wash over me. But either way, I leave worship with fresh strength for today and hope for tomorrow.

We do not worship together in this space each week for the sole purpose of sending our praises and prayers up to God. We also come together to feel the movement of the Holy Spirit in the worship experience itself. Reading Scripture, singing well-loved hymns and simply being aware of the presence of God in this space are ways that God can provide us with strength, peace and comfort. Worship is not just us offering something to God; it's an opportunity for God to offer us something, too.

May we be open to receiving God's sustaining power through our worship together this morning.

—Ava McClung



4316 Abrams Road | Dallas, Texas 75214 | 214-452-3100 | wilshirebc.org

Building a Community of Faith Shaped by the Spirit of Jesus Christ

Partnered with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

Member, Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists

On the cover: *Loaves and Fish*, artist unknown, 1962, altar cloth from the Catholic chapel at the United States Air Force Academy Cadet Chapel, Colorado Springs. From *Art in the Christian Tradition*, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville.

July 28, 2024
11:00 a.m.
Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Chiming of the Hour

We gather in community this morning to worship God.
To help center our focus in worship, please silence all electronic devices.

Welcome to Worshipers

Molly Shepard

Prelude

Prelude in Classic Style

Gordon Young

Opening Sentences

Claire Michie

As we gather for worship this morning, stir our hearts and minds, O God. Awaken us to your Spirit that so gently sustains us. As we sing, may our hearts choose love, as we pray, may our spirits find peace, and as we listen, may our bodies rise in praise.

+Congregational Song

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms
No. 640

SHOWALTER

Epistle Reading — Ephesians 3:14-21

David McCoy

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of God's glory, God may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through the Spirit and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to that same God who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

+All congregants who are able are invited to stand.
Hearing devices are available in the Narthex and South Atrium.

Be not afraid: for I have redeemed you;
Be not afraid: I have called you by name.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
When you pass through the floods, they will not sweep over you;
When you walk through the fire, you will not be consumed;
You are mine, you are precious in my sight.

My love for you is everlasting; my love for you shall have no end.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
When you pass through the floods, they will not sweep over you;
When you pass through the fire, you will not be consumed.
You are mine, you are precious in my sight.

+Gospel Reading — John 6:1-21

Rob Banta

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place, so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world." When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself. When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

For the Word of God in Scripture,
For the Word of God among us,
And for the Word of God within us,
Thanks be to God!

+Congregational Song	<i>He Leadeth Me! O Blessed Thought</i> No. 68	HE LEADETH ME
Message	“Not If, But How”	Heather Mustain
Anthem	<i>Ubi Caritas</i> Nova Candy McComb, director	Ola Gjeilo
<p><i>Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.</i> <i>Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.</i> <i>Exultemus, et in ipso iucundemur.</i> <i>Timeamus, et amemus Deum vivum.</i> <i>Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.</i> <i>Amen.</i></p> <p>Where charity and love are, God is there. Christ’s love has gathered us as one. Let us rejoice and be delighted in God. Let us honor and love the living God. And may we love each other with sincere hearts.</p>		
Prayers of the People		Cindy Estee
Silence	We pause in silence to reflect and to be attentive to the Spirit of God	
The Lord’s Prayer	<p>Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, As we forgive those who sin against us; And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.</p>	
+Congregational Song	<i>Higher Ground</i> No. 641	HIGHER GROUND
Sharing of Decisions		Heather Mustain
Benediction		Heather Mustain
Postlude	<i>Allegro from Concerto No. 4</i>	J.S. Bach/Thompson

Meet today's worship leaders

Rob Banta and his wife, Pam, joined Wilshire in 1990 and have three adult sons — Ryan, Blaine and Brad. Rob is a deacon, a member of Epiphany Class and serves on the Personnel Committee. He is a retired attorney.

Cindy Estee joined Wilshire last year with her husband, Charlie. They attend Cord of Three Class, serve on the Lord's Supper Ministry Team and volunteer at the Wilkinson Center and the Stewpot. Cindy is a Stephen Minister and volunteers with Wilshire's rent and utility assistance program. A retired attorney, she has two adult children and three grandchildren.

David McCoy joined Wilshire in 2018. He sings in Sanctuary Choir, attends Cord of Three Class, volunteers with Friday Friends and serves on the Funeral Ministry Team. David is retired from a career as a licensed funeral director.

Claire Michie has been attending Wilshire her whole life and is the daughter of Iain and Christie Michie. Claire will soon begin her sophomore year at Richardson High School, where she is a JV cheerleader. She is active in Wilshire Student Ministry and sings in Youth Choir.

Audrey Pottkotter is a rising sophomore at Oklahoma City University, where she is majoring in musical theater and vocal performance. She joined Wilshire in 2019 with her parents, Amy and Kurt Pottkotter, and her siblings, Joshua and Katherine. Audrey has spent this summer serving as a music ministry intern at Wilshire and performing with Garland Summer Musicals.

Molly Shepard grew up at Wilshire and is married to Michael. Their daughter, Olivia, will turn 2 in September. Molly's parents are Wilshire members Ed and Linda Francis, and her sister is Julie Francis. Molly is a deacon, a member of Ithaca Class and sings in Sanctuary Choir. She is a vice president at Valuation Research Corporation.



We're glad you're here. If you're a guest today and would like to let us know, please scan the QR code with your smartphone camera to access our online response card. You can also scan the code to make a financial contribution or submit a prayer request. Response cards and offering envelopes are available in the pew racks and can be placed in the offering plate or offering boxes.

Staff contacts

Phone numbers: 214-452- followed by extension shown below. **Email addresses:** first letter of first name and full last name followed by @wilshirebc.org (example: tpeoples@wilshirebc.org). Staff members with phone extensions have Wilshire email addresses.

Communications

- Mark McKenzie, Communications Director (3169)

Congregational Care

- Barbara Clayton, Pastoral Care Assistant (3125)
- Linda Garner, Parish Nurse (3151)
- Carolyn Murray, Coordinator of Congregational Life (3170)
- Heather Mustain, Associate Pastor (3110)

Early Childhood Learning Center

- Kelly Akins, ECLC Assistant Director and Curriculum Specialist (3139)
- Carole McClung, ECLC Administrative Assistant (3115)
- Ramona Randle, ECLC Director (3140)

Finance

- Lori Gooden, Director of Finance (3131)

Food Services

- Luke Munion, Food Service Staff
- Haley Robinson, Food Service Director (3117)
- Shari Spell, Food Service Staff
- Gillian Tinsley, Food Service Staff
- Wilfredo Velasquez-Cruz, Food Service Staff

Hospitality and Facilities

- Maricela Escutia, Facilities Supervisor
- Holly Irvin, Director of Hospitality (3150)
- Daniel Latin, Facilities
- Leticia Medina, Facilities
- Rachel Oney, Receptionist (3165)
- Kevin Sierra, Facilities
- Leticia Vega, Facilities

Missions and Advocacy

- Abbey Adcox, Missions and Advocacy Coordinator (3127)
- Heather Mustain, Associate Pastor (3110)

Music and Worship

- Jeff Brummel, Associate Minister of Music/Organist (3122)
- Carol Cabaniss, Music and Worship Coordinator (3106)
- Shana Gaines, Wilshire Winds Director (3163)
- Ralph Manuel, Handbell Coordinator (3161)
- Candy McComb, Children's Choir Coordinator (3124)
- Ariel Merivil, Minister of Music (3135)

Operations and Technology

- Rene Altamirano, Maintenance Technician
- Jim Tapley, Audio and Video Coordinator

Pathways to Ministry

- Debby Burton, Pathways to Ministry Assistant (3158)
- Charlie Fuller, Pathways to Ministry Director and Coach in Residence (3123)
- George Mason, Senior Pastor Emeritus and Pathways to Ministry Alumni Director (3133)

Senior Pastor

- Chelsea Hopkins, Executive Assistant (3132)
- Geri McKenzie, Executive Director of Administration (3159)
- Timothy Peoples, Senior Pastor (3132)

Spiritual Formation

- Darren DeMent, Associate Pastor (3102)
- Julie Girards, Minister to Children (3104)
- Staci Langley, Childcare Coordinator
- Katie Murray, Minister to Senior Adults (3129)
- Barbara Peterson, Librarian (3114)
- Sarah Yodh, Spiritual Formation Coordinator (3130)



New residents start this week

New pastoral residents Georgia McKee and Maggie Morey have moved into their homes on Resident Row and will begin their two-year terms at Wilshire on Thursday, Aug. 1.

Georgia, originally from Frisco, graduated this spring from Wake Forest University School of Divinity in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She holds a B.A. in faith and social justice from Nashville's Belmont University. For the last two years, Georgia has worked in communications for the Baptist Joint Committee. She and her wife, Sophia, were married in June and have two dogs, Dolly and Goose.

Maggie grew up in High Point, North Carolina, and comes to Wilshire from Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina. At Duke, she pursued certificates in Baptist studies and food, faith and environmental justice. Maggie earned a B.A. in English and religion from Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. Maggie is married to Jonathan, and they have a cat named Maple.

Charlie Fuller, director of Pathways to Ministry, said, "We couldn't be more pleased about the arrival of Georgia and Maggie! They soon will hit the ground running — teaching, preaching and working in their new roles as ministers. Thanks for your prayers for them and encouragement to them in the days to come."

Georgia and Maggie's start marks the relaunch of Wilshire's residency program after an inten-



Georgia McKee



Maggie Morey

tional pause for evaluation. The program began in 2002 and counts 40 alumni serving around the U.S. and beyond.

Pathways renovations

A new Pathways suite has been established on the north end of the second floor. The area includes the residents' shared office space ("The Shire"), a conference room, a shared intern office and offices for Charlie and Pathways Assistant Debby Burton. In addition, the first two houses on Resident Row have undergone extensive renovations this summer.

Charlie said, "Special thanks to Geri McKenzie, Lori Gooden, Gina Oregon and multiple committees for their leadership with the renovations — and a special thank you to the Compass Class painting crew for their work on the second floor."



Sundays: Worship at 11 a.m. Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 a.m. Our service livestreams at youtube.com/wilshirebaptist and at wilshirebc.org/worship/livestream. Keep up with Wilshire by subscribing to our YouTube channel and following us on Facebook and Instagram.

Kelly Akins named preschool minister

Kelly Akins has been hired as Wilshire's new minister to preschoolers and will begin in the part-time role on Aug. 1.

Kelly will be leaving her job as assistant director and curriculum specialist at Wilshire's Early Childhood Learning Center, a position she has held since 2021. She previously served ECLC as a pre-K teacher. Before that, she worked 32 years as a public school kindergarten teacher, first in Garland ISD and later Richardson ISD.

Kelly holds a master's degree in education from the University of North Texas and a bachelor's degree in education with a music minor from Oklahoma Baptist University. She holds endorsements in kindergarten and gifted and



talented education from Texas Wesleyan University and UNT, respectively.

A Wilshire member since 1990, Kelly is married to Allan Akins, and they are parents to two adult children, Brian and Emily. Kelly is a deacon and has served Wilshire in many volunteer

roles related to music and education. Among other things, she has been a preschool Sunday School teacher, Cooking Camp chef, children's choir leader and chair of the Weekday Education Committee.



No robe. No commitment.

Do you want to sing in choir but feel you're not able to make the weekly commitment? Join the Summer Drop-In Choir on August 4 or 11 in Choral Hall at 9:15 a.m. All are welcome either day or both days. No dress code, choir robes or prior rehearsal is needed. We'll have a quick 30-minute rehearsal, go to our Sunday School classes and then sing for worship together. Invite your friends, neighbors or favorite youth to join you. Contact Minister of Music Ariel Merivil at amerivil@wilshirebc.org with any questions.

Back to School Drive

Benefiting Dover Elementary and Gateway of Grace

ITEMS DUE AUG. 11

Visit wilshirebc.org/events/bts-drive



Welcome, Y'ALL!

AUG.
18

PROMOTION SUNDAY
BBQ LUNCH
ENTERTAINMENT



Promotion Sunday

Wilshire will celebrate the end of summer and kick off a new school year on Promotion Sunday, Aug. 18. Preschoolers, children and youth will move to new Sunday School classes, and it's a great day for adults to try a new class or try Sunday School for the first time.

Lunch and a show

After worship, all are invited to Community Hall for a BBQ lunch and some down-home entertainment by Wilshire's own. Cost for the meal is \$10 per adult, \$5 for kids ages 4 to 9 and free for 3 and under. Cash/check/credit will be accepted at the door. Western wear is optional.

Half-price grub

We're roundin' up a posse to help set up Community Hall on Saturday and for various tasks on Sunday. Volunteers get lunch for half price. Find the sign-up link at wilshirebc.org/events/welcome-yall.



Youth group expanding to include grade 6

On Promotion Sunday, Aug. 18, Wilshire's youth group, currently grades 7–12, will expand to include students in grade 6.

Associate Pastor Darren DeMent explained, "Most of the school districts our students attend have sixth, seventh and eighth graders together in a middle school model, and other districts are moving in that direction. So having sixth graders in children's ministry — equivalent to elementary school — no longer matched our families' school experiences. Many CBF youth ministers I know have used a 6 to 12 model for years, so this change brings us more in line with what like-minded churches are already doing."

Youth Sunday School will have three classes grouped by school grade: 6–8; 9–10; and 11–12.

Darren said, "We've always divided the group by age to address topics in age-appropriate ways, and we'll continue to do that at camps, retreats or anytime we need to."

Youth Choir starts Aug. 18

Wilshire's Youth Choir, now directed by Minister of Music Ariel Merivil, will begin weekly rehearsals on Sunday, Aug. 18, at 12:30 p.m. in Choral Hall. All students in grades 6 through 12 are welcome. On Aug. 18, students can eat at the churchwide BBQ lunch in Community Hall. On typical weeks, a snack lunch will be provided.

Children's Choir resumes Sept. 8 with new scheduling approach

In an effort to encourage participation and reduce scheduling stress on families, Children's Choir (grades 1–5) will look different this school year. Singers can now select one, two or three sections of choir instead of committing to the entire year. Each section will include a few rehearsals followed by a performance. Rehearsals will be held Sundays from 12:30 to 1:15 p.m. after a snack lunch.

■ **Fall Choir:** Sept. 8–Oct. 6

■ **Christmas Choir:** Nov. 3–Dec. 8

■ **Spring Choir:** March 23–April 13

Kindergartners will have choir as part of KidConnect on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. Pre-K and 3-year-olds will have choir as part of Preschool Music & Missions on Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

To learn more, contact Candy McComb, children's choir coordinator, at cmccomb@wilshirebc.org.

Blessing of the Backpacks

AUG. 11 DURING WORSHIP

The annual Blessing of the Backpacks will be held during worship on Sunday, Aug. 11. Children are encouraged to bring their backpacks or school bags to church, and during the service they'll be invited to the front to receive a blessing as the school year begins.



Childcare coordinator leaving

Staci Langley, a familiar face to Wilshire families for 22 years, is leaving her role as childcare coordinator, effective July 31. In this part-time position, Staci has managed childcare on Sundays, Wednesdays and for special events since 2002. A resident of Forney, she plans to spend more time with family, including caring for her grandchildren. Senior Pastor Timothy Peoples said, "She may not be known to the entire congregation, but to anyone who has raised kids here in the last 22 years, Staci has been a constant, welcoming presence on our preschool hall. Through her diligence and dedication, she has ministered to a generation of Wilshire families, and for that I'm eternally grateful."

■ With Staci's departure, Wilshire is hiring to fill the role of childcare coordinator. Visit wilshirebc.org/employment.

Adventurers Trivia Night, Aug. 5

The Wilshire Adventurers will enjoy a trivia contest on Monday, Aug. 5, at 6:30 p.m. in Community Hall. Sam Tinsley will emcee; cobbler and ice cream will be served. Cost: \$5 per person. Adventurers is a fellowship group for those 60 and up.

Lunch & Learn trip on Aug. 7



The final Lunch & Learn of the summer will be held on Wednesday, Aug. 7. We'll meet at the church at 11 a.m. to carpool to Wilshire

mission partner Empowering the Masses, a nonprofit that empowers our neighbors by providing life skills and education. We'll then eat lunch together at a restaurant. Lunch & Learn will be offered on the first and third Wednesdays each month starting Sept. 4.

For new members and guests

■ **Time with Tim**, an informal chance for guests and new members to meet and visit with Senior Pastor Timothy Peoples, will meet Sunday, Aug. 25, at 9:45 a.m. in Timothy's office (2203). Contact: Carolyn Murray (cmurray@wilshirebc.org)

■ **Wilshire Welcome**, a one-hour session to help guests and new members learn more about the church, will meet Sunday, Sept. 22, at 9:45 a.m. in the Prayer Room near the chapel. Contact: Carolyn Murray (cmurray@wilshirebc.org)

CBF's Laura Ayala here Aug. 18



Rev. Laura Ayala, coordinator of global missions for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, will be at Wilshire on Sunday, Aug. 18. She will speak in McIver Chapel at 9:45 a.m. and will help lead in worship. Before her current role, Laura served as pastor of First Baptist Church of Rio Piedras in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Wilshire's partner in recent mission trips.

Fellowship Southwest Compassion + Justice Conference



Wilshire is one of the sponsors for Fellowship Southwest's Compassion + Justice Conference, to be held Sept. 20 and 21 at Life in Deep Ellum.

Keynote speakers will discuss topics including hunger, native issues, immigration and racial justice. Wilshire has a few free registrations; if you'd like to go, contact Associate Pastor Heather Mustain at hmustain@wilshirebc.org. Learn more at fellowshipsouthwest.org/conference-2024.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE

Resumes Aug. 21

Koinonia Café

5 p.m. | Community Hall | Buffet dinner for the whole family with kid-friendly options available. Cash/check/credit accepted at the door. Full Meal: \$10 for ages 10 and up; \$5 for kids 4 to 9; free for kids 3 and under; \$35 household max. Soup & Salad Meal: \$7.

Preschool Music & Missions

6 p.m. | Age 3–Pre-K | Preschool choir plus fun activities and lessons focused on God's love and caring for others.

KidConnect

6 p.m. | K–Grade 5 | A rotation of activities to help kids learn how to love God and others with every part of themselves. Each week is different! Activities include art, music, recreation, science and more. Kindergartners will have choir as part of KidConnect.

Bible Study or Vespers

6 p.m. | Adults will remain in Community Hall after dinner most weeks for Bible Study, a topical series or a one-off event. On the fourth Sunday each month, our pastoral residents will lead a Vespers service in McIver Chapel.

■ **Aug. 21:** Get to Know the New Residents

■ **Aug. 28:** Vespers

■ **Sept. 4:** Bible Study series begins

Watershed

6:30 p.m. | Grades 6–12 | Wilshire Student Ministry's weekly time of Bible study and music in the Youth Center.

Sanctuary Choir

7 p.m. | Choral Hall | Wilshire's main adult choir rehearses weekly; new singers are always welcome. No audition.

Childcare is offered from 6 to 7:15 p.m. for infants to 2-year-olds with parents involved in church activities.



Lunch & Learn to be offered twice a month

Lunch & Learn will be held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month this fall, starting on **Sept. 4**. All are invited at 11:30 a.m. for a buffet lunch followed by minister-led Bible study. Watch the *Tapestry* each week to see who's teaching as we continue where we left off in our journey through the Old Testament. Lunch costs \$10 each. No RSVP necessary. Pay at the door.

Someone to talk with.

If you are facing a life challenge and would like to have a spiritual friend to walk alongside you for a season of healing, perhaps you would benefit from a Stephen Minister.

Stephen Ministry pairs trained lay people with individuals in need of Christian companionship during times of life crisis. Wilshire has trained Stephen Ministers available.

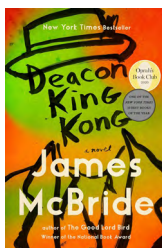
To learn more about receiving confidential care from a Stephen Minister, please reach out using our dedicated email address, stephenministry@wilshirebc.org, or call 214-452-3176.

stephen
MINISTRY®

Bright Stars of Bethlehem gala

A virtual gala for Wilshire mission partner Bright Stars of Bethlehem will be held the evening of Sept. 7 at the home of Mary and Kenton Keller. Bright Stars raises awareness and support for Dar al-Kalima University, the first and only university for arts, culture and design in Palestine. The evening will include inspiration and stories of resilience from students and remarks from Mitri Raheb, founder of Bright Stars. RSVP to Associate Pastor Heather Mustain (hmustain@wilshirebc.org) by Aug. 30.

Men's Book Club meets Aug. 20



Wilshire's new Men's Book Club will discuss James McBride's 2020 novel *Deacon King Kong* at its next meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 20, at 7 p.m. in the Parlor. The group plans to meet the third Tuesday of every month. Contact: Mike Meripolski (meripolski@att.net) or Scott Spreier (swspreier@gmail.com).



■ **WOW Brown Bag Book Club** | Aug. 1 | Noon | 1205-L | *Secrets of a Charmed Life* by Susan Meissner. Contact: Carolyn Murray (cmurray@wilshirebc.org)

■ **WOW Tuesday Evening Book Club** | Aug. 13 | 6:30 p.m. | Parlor | *Will the Circle Be Unbroken?: A Memoir of Learning to Believe You're Gonna Be Okay* by Sean Dietrich. Contact: Debby Burton (dburton@wilshirebc.org)

■ Join Women of Wilshire for **mahjong** the first Friday of each month at 10 a.m. Sign up at wilshirebc.org/events/mahjong.

Ava McClung

Hometown: Dallas

Present City: Houston

University/College: Rice University

Major: Religious Studies

Tell us about your family.

I live with my parents, Britt and Carole, and my younger sisters, Miriam and Ruby. My paternal grandfather and great-grandfather were Southern Baptist pastors, and most of my extended family are Southern Baptist or Church of Christ.

What is your favorite place to travel?

My family tends to take really long road trips around the country, and I've come to enjoy exploring all the different hidden corners of America. I really love the mountains, though!

What brought you to Wilshire and when?

I did Pre-K at Wilshire's Early Childhood Learning Center. My family joined Wilshire in 2011 (when I was a first grader), and I've been here ever since.

What do you think God is up to in your life right now?

I have long felt a call to ministry, and right now the details of what that will look like are beginning to take shape. I am considering divinity schools and ordination paths while also thinking critically about my faith and what being a Christian means to me.

Tell us about your faith journey.

I have always been a person with big philosophical and theological questions. There was a pe-



riod of time while I was in elementary school where I would throw weekly tantrums accusing my parents of brainwashing me by taking me to church. I was very troubled by the idea that if I had been born into a family of another faith, I would probably have adopted that faith without

thinking much about it. I was very resistant to the idea of being Christian until I felt like it was by intentional conviction. I didn't get baptized until I was an eighth grader, and I continued to be somewhat troubled by big questions and gaps in my knowledge about Christianity. I decided that I should study religion academically to gain the factual knowledge to make informed decisions about my faith. Ironically, the facts have made me more confused than ever, but getting to learn about Christianity, as well as lots of other religions, from a secular perspective has really opened my mind to all of the beautiful possibility in the mystery of God. I have found my way to the Episcopal Church while at Rice, and I am really enjoying worshiping in that tradition, but I'm still discerning what denomination feels right to me.

What's something interesting most people wouldn't know about you?

I write crossword puzzles for the Rice newspaper, and I'm going to be the crossword editor starting in the fall.

THANK YOU FOR GIVING

Your gifts are changing lives inside and outside our walls. Here are some ways to make a financial contribution to Wilshire.

ONLINE. Set up a recurring or one-time gift charged to your debit or credit card or as an ACH from your checking account. Get started at wilshirebc.org/give.

REALM CONNECT APP. Easily make gifts and see past giving on your mobile device. Available at your device's app store. Find download links at wilshirebc.org/realms.

AUTOMATIC BANK PAY. Visit your bank's website and set up Wilshire as a payee. The bank will send the church a check.

MAIL. Send to Finance Director Lori Gooden's attention at Wilshire.

TEXT. Text WILSHIRE and a dollar amount (ex: WILSHIRE 50) to 73256.

DONATE STOCKS. Contact Lori to learn how to donate appreciated stocks.

FROM YOUR IRA. For those over 70.5 years old, tax-free IRA gifts offer a financial benefit and may reduce future tax burdens.



Scan code with your smartphone camera to make an electronic contribution.

At Wilshire, we use a one-fund approach to giving called the Unified Budget. Your gifts support the basic mission, ministry and operations of the church. Once the Unified Budget is fulfilled, gifts overflow into visionary aspects of our mission.

This Week

Sunday, July 28

- Back to School Drive Collection
- Passport Kids Camp, Brownwood
- Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.
- Worship, Sanctuary, 11 a.m.
- Enneagram with Heather, 1205-G, noon

Monday, July 29

- Back to School Drive Collection
- Passport Kids Camp, Brownwood

Tuesday, July 30

- Back to School Drive Collection
- Passport Kids Camp, Brownwood

Wednesday, July 31

- Back to School Drive Collection
- Enneagram with Heather, 1205-G, noon
- Spanish with a Mission, 1205-L, 4 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 1

- Back to School Drive Collection
- WOW Brown Bag Book Club, 1205-L, noon
- Stephen Ministry Leaders, 1205-G, 12:30 p.m.
- Knit Unto Others, Parlor, 1:30 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 2

- Back to School Drive Collection
- Mahjong, 1205-L, 10 a.m.

Sunday, Aug. 4

- Back to School Drive Collection
- WSM Book Club, Youth Center, 8:30 a.m.
- Summer Drop-In Choir Rehearsal, Choral Hall, 9:15 a.m.
- Sunday School, various locations, 9:45 a.m.
- Worship Service, Sanctuary, 11 a.m.