

THE LOVERS LANE UMC

SENIOR PASTOR SUCCESSION TEAM

Hope Adams



Hope and Ann have been members of LLUMC for over three years and typically attend Thrive worship. Hope has been very involved as a leader with our Missions and Outreach team, most recently fundraising for a mission trip to Honduras through a “Hope on a Mission” Cornhole Tournament. She has led our team in rethinking our Food Ministry strategy, and been instrumental in leading Everybody’s Christmas. She and Ann served with Preteen and Student Ministry as faithful volunteers and she serves on the leadership team of Thrive. Hope is an entrepreneur, holding multiple professional jobs, most recently in coaching soccer. She also has significant experience in the insurance industry.

Jenny Anchondo Oakes



Jenny and her husband Heath chose LLUMC seven years ago, even before Brighton (7) and Gemma Sue came along. They typically attend Thrive worship and Brighton loves Sunday School. She has been part of MOPS and occasionally volunteers to help with Sunday School. She is always willing to lend her incredible expertise in making videos, being featured in podcasts, and will help us communicate the work of the Succession Team. Jenny is a journalist and an Emmy-Award-winning news anchor, host and reporter. She has worked for CBS, NBC and Fox at TV stations all over the country. Currently she is working CW33-TV in Dallas as a news anchor, host and reporter.

Jim Bentley



Jim has been a member of LLUMC with his wife Genie since 1995. They have been consummate volunteers in many capacities and faithful members of the Adams & Eves Sunday School class. Jim has served on the SPRC, Board of Stewards, and Foundation Board. He also practices and sings weekly in our Sanctuary Choir. He does all of this in addition to being one of Dallas’ finest Ophthalmologists. He has been recognized for his professional expertise over 55 years, and his care for patients from all walks of life and backgrounds. To sit in the waiting room of any clinic he has worked in is to see a broad display of diversity in patients waiting on his unconditional care.

Karl Dial



Karl has been a dedicated member of Lovers Lane UMC since 1991, when he and his wife, Kay, settled in Dallas and sought a church home for their growing family. Karl faithfully attends the 8:15 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. worship services. Karl and Kay have also contributed as team teachers for children's classes and also with adults in the 24/7 Sunday School class; where they've been active members from its inception. Over the years, Karl has held numerous leadership roles, including serving on the Executive Committee of the Church Council, the Board of Stewards, Trustees, and the SPRC. For the past 25 years, he has shared his legal expertise through the Legal Risk Committee, offering invaluable advice. We say around here, it's not a legal document to be signed unless Karl says so.

Tom Falk



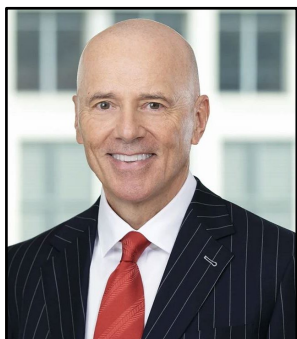
Tom and Karen Falk became members of LLUMC this year, engaging enthusiastically in the Thrive Worship service. They bring a wealth of experience in church and community service: Karen has led a teaching ministry, and Tom has offered leadership and financial expertise to businesses and churches alike. Tom's extensive experience with business successions will be invaluable to our group, while his fresh perspective as a new member brings an added dimension to LLUMC. Tom served as CEO of Kimberly-Clark from 2002 to 2018 and has been chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas since 2022. His dedication to helping others is evident through his involvement in various boards, including his role as a governor of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. Last year, Tom and Karen were honored with the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas' J. Erik Jonsson Award, its highest recognition for volunteer service.

Susan Gandy



Susan joined Lovers Lane UMC 27 years ago, just six months before Stan arrived. She is a regular at 11 a.m. Traditional worship service and listens to Thrive or Crosswalk services when traveling. In her early years at LLUMC, Susan taught children's Sunday School, later serving as a greeter leader, a member of United Women of Faith, the Koinonia Sunday School class, and various Women's Spiritual Growth groups. She has also served on the SPRC twice. Susan's generosity helped us produce the wannaknowwhy.com marketing campaign that brought a huge cultural change to our church ushering in diversity like the church had never experienced. She and husband Woody have also been instrumental in partnering with Peter Weato and LLUMC with other friends to create the life saving Zoe Geh Hospital in Liberia. Her passion for seeing Young people grow in faith led to us doing ministry for years in the Trinity Groves area out of her building that we called "723".

Greg Gordon



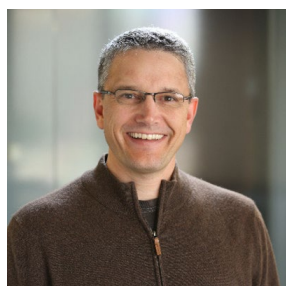
Greg and Kathy Gordon joined Lovers Lane UMC in June of 2023. They won the hearts of the staff quickly as they typically worship in two worship services every Sunday. The two are natural encouragers and have quickly learned the culture of our church through their intentional exposure to their new congregation. They came our way in the midst of disaffiliation in our denomination because their church left the denomination. Greg served in leadership positions in past churches they have been members of and he is going to begin his time of service on the SPRC in January. Professionally Greg is a partner with Jones Day represents clients in complex, high-profile chapter 11 cases and corporate restructurings. Greg is a top-rated attorney selected to Super Lawyers for 15 consecutive years, we rate him as a super-churchman as well.

Marsha Gordon



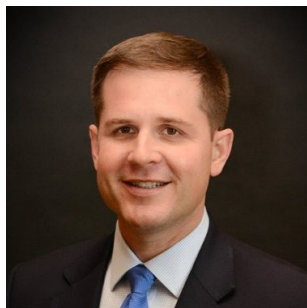
Marsha and Doug have been members of LLUMC for 37 years and primarily attend the 8:15 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. traditional services. They faithfully worship with us online when out of town on Sundays. Marsha has been an active leader in the United Methodist Women and now United Women in Faith organization. She was one of the early members of Knit, Purl, & Pray ministry that serves to bring comfort and prayers to those dealing with illness or loss. She has been on the Foundation Board, the Generosity Committee for annual giving, and the Board of Stewards. She works with countless civic and community causes including one of our outreach ministries in South Dallas that we call Dallas Bethlehem Center.

Mark Hart



Mark and his wife Amy, an allstar children's Sunday School teacher, joined Lovers Lane in 1997 and they would say that LLUMC was instrumental in nurturing their three sons. Mark typically attends Thrive, but will also visit the Traditional services too. Mark served in the youth ministry as a small group leader for almost ten years and has served on a number of committees over the years, most currently rolling into position as the SPRC chair. Mark was the Co-Founder and Co-Owner of a technology consulting firm (Artis Consulting) which was sold last year. Mark hopes to bring a children and youth perspective with professional experience to facilitate a succession process that is thoughtful and transparent.

Brent Houston



Brent and his wife Stacy, along with their two daughters, Virginia and Julia, have been members of Walnut Hill Church since 2007. Brent and Stacy Houston have been members of Walnut Hill since 2007. They joined after they were married and before they had their children. They've raised both of their girls in the church and have been in multiple leadership positions at Walnut Hill over the years including finance, SPRC, and church council. He's The Managing Director and Senior Client Executive at J.P. Morgan Chase dealing primarily with real estate banking. He's been serving on our SPRC at LLUMC since the Walnut Hill merger and has assisted the pastoral staff with personnel transitions. He is always a peaceful presence even in the midst of high pressure situations and offers great wisdom and professionalism.

Steve Love



Steve and Mari joined LLUMC in 2021 and they typically attend the 8:15 AM worship service. Mari will serve on the Nominations Committee and Steve will also serve on SPRC. Professionally Steve serves in the all-important role of Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council President and Chief Executive Officer He has been named the chair-elect of the board of trustees of the Greater-Irving Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce. He has 45 years of management experience and is responsible for connecting and promoting collaboration between the 90 member hospitals of the DFWHC. Everywhere Steve and Mari have been involved in church, they have given of themselves freely and intentionally. We are fortunate to have them as members and for Steve to be serving on our succession team.

Wendy Lucas



Wendy and Carl joined LLUMC in 1999 and typically attend the 8:15 AM worship service. They have raised all three of their wonderful children at Lovers Lane. Wendy has served professionally as a highly regarded realtor throughout Dallas, with specialty in the Lake Highlands area. She has also assisted several of our staff members in acquiring a home. She has served at Lovers Lane on the Children and Family team, has served with Vacation Bible School and Student Ministry, on the Staff Parish Relations team, Nominations Committee, and brings a warm sense of hospitality and welcome to every space she enters. Wendy and Carl are the epitome of the Lovers Lane spirit of inclusion and acceptance.

Leslie Mason



Leslie has been a member of Lovers Lane since 2010, along with her young adult daughter, Carly. She has been a valuable leader in Crosswalk Worship throughout her tenure at Lovers Lane. Leslie has been instrumental in creating a culture of welcome and hospitality to all people in Crosswalk, as well as participating in various small group offerings at Lovers Lane. She has a deep spirituality and connection to God and will bring valuable discernment to the team. She has recently retired from Intuit as an Executive Recruiter and will bring her professional experience and expertise, commitment to prayer, study and former leadership in the United Methodist Church to the succession process. Leslie's desire is to help the team ensure Lovers Lane's culture and values in finding our next Senior Pastor who will lead us in growth and commitment to our mission of Loving All people into a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Arnold Shokouhi



Arnold and Alison have been members of the church since 2019 and their three daughters have been baptized here and their newborn son's baptism is coming soon. Arnold is an active member of a men's Bible study group and also presently serves as the leader of the Family Ministry Power of One Team as well as on the Pastor's Transition Team. Professionally, Arnold is quite accomplished as a lawyer with the firm McCathern, Shokouhi, Evans. He was named to the Texas Super Lawyers Rising Stars® list from 2013 to 2021. In 2024, *D CEO* told Arnold's story in its monthly "Roots" feature, which highlights North Texas business leaders who immigrated to the region, in an article called "How One Decision by Arnold Shokouhi's Mother Changed his Family's Life Forever", which is a story of great notoriety about fleeing Iran's turmoil in the early 1980's.

Dennis Street



Dennis has been a member of LLUMC for 12 years. He is a faithful attendee of Crosswalk and has served that part of our community extensively. He serves on the Home Plate Ministry (Austin Street Center Lunches) and is on the LLUMC Foundation Board. He has served on the SPRC and Generosity Committee as well. Dennis has a heart for missions and has been on two mission trips to El Salvador with the church. He hopes to bring his experience of growing up in the church and feeling tolerated, but not completely accepted, and unable to be himself. His stated goal for his role on this team is to help find the best Senior Pastor to ensure LLUMC continues its mission of Loving All into a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Chuck Thoele



Chuck and his wife Beth have been members of LLUMC since they were first married and moved to Dallas 43 years ago. They raised their son, Nick and daughter, Brooke in the church and served when called on in children and youth ministry throughout their children's time of involvement. Chuck has been on the Finance Committee, the Foundation and Board of Stewards as well as SPRC. Chuck and Beth attend Thrive as well as Crosswalk and Traditional. Chuck's name is one that often comes up when a leader and his expertise is needed. He

hopes to bring some perspective and history to the process and looks forward to working with everyone on the team in this all-important venture.

Julie Weato



Julie has been a member of LLUMC for 22 years and she and her husband Emmuel have four children who have been active in our ministries here, all of whom are 3rd generation members. Betty and Peter Weato came to LLUMC as a family in 1996 fleeing the tragic civil war in their homeland of Liberia. The Weato family legacy in our African Fellowship spans three decades. Julie is very much involved in the Children and Youth Ministry with their wonderful children, and is an advocate for the "blending of cultures" approach to our Family Ministry. She is a stellar representative of our African Fellowship where she is loved and respected for her "we can" spirit.

Her perspective will be invaluable in our search for a new Senior Pastor.

Scott Williams



Scott and his wife Leslie have been members of Lovers Lane for approximately 10 years and they attend all of the worship services in order to see, and be, a part of the entire church. Through that practice, as well as having many one-on-one meetings with the staff over the years, Scott has developed a very good connection and understanding of our staff dynamics and strengths. That is what he hopes to bring to the team, at least among other things, an understanding of what type of individual would best fit with our current staff needs. Scott has been a member and

Chair of SPRC, member, Vice Chair and Chair of the Executive Council, and a member of the Metro District Committee on Ordained Ministry for the past three years, and Leslie has served as a Board Member for Rays of Light for the past 5+ years.

Jim Ozier

In 1990, Jim Ozier followed the founder of a 7-year-old church, Trietsch Memorial United Methodist Church in Flower Mound, Texas. In his role as the second pastor for this young congregation, he learned first-hand how difficult the transition of pastoral leadership can be when a church has never done it before! When he left nearly 18 years later, the church had grown to more than 4,000 members and helped birth 3 new congregations. In addition, Jim saw how critical the “passing of the baton” is for the successor pastor following a long-tenured pastorate.



In 2008, Jim felt God’s nudging to leverage his own experiences and help other pastors going through critical leadership transitions. He became a trained coach—networking closely with Jim Griffith Coaching and with Path I of the United Methodist Church. Serving on the Appointive Cabinet of the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church for 6 years as the Director of New Church Development and Congregational Transformation, Jim brings consultative insights and experience to Bishops and Cabinets dealing with issues of church culture, growth and vitality.



Jim has trained more than 20,000 pastors and church leaders in over thirty Annual Conferences in the areas of:

- Assessing and Changing Church Culture
- Passing the Baton in Pastoral Transitions
- Pastoral Searches for larger churches
- Churches wanting to improve hospitality

Jim has presented at the Church of the Resurrection Leadership Institute, , and keynoted the Indiana Annual Conference. He has contributed articles for a variety of national publications, such as “The Circuit Rider” and “Leading Ideas” and keynoted at United Methodist Annual Conferences sessions and spoken at numerous venues. Jim’s wife, Suzanne, is a retired Special Education teacher. They live in Irving, Texas and have a beautiful 400-acre retreat site in East Texas.

