

A Brief History

Windcrest United Methodist Church was founded in the fall of 1964 (October 11, 1964) with 33 dedicated Christians. The worship services were first held in a ranch house located on the corner of Midcrown and Crestway. **Rev. Roy Hilliard** was the initial pastor, and literally walked door to door through Windcrest, inviting families to be a part of this new Methodist congregation.



The old ranch house circa 1964

The first building constructed was the Hilliard Building, built in 1965, and the new congregation, which had grown to 140 members, moved on Valentine's Day, 1965 to its current location at Walzem and Midcrown. On the Charter date of March 14, 1965, the formal membership was 111.

In June 1965, **Rev. Dan Baker** was appointed to the church, bringing an enthusiastic preaching style. Dan left in April of 1969. During the three-month interim, **Chuck Clontz** ably filled the pulpit.

From 1969-1975, **Rev. Luster Lockett** served the church, during which a new, innovative and unique sanctuary, now known as the Gathering Place, was constructed.

Rev. John Donaho succeeded Lockett, and served the church for three years, from 1975-1978. The Donaho Library is named after John, and we still enjoy the company of his wife, Challes.



Rev. Dan Bazar was named the senior pastor from 1978-1980.

Rev. Tom McClung came to Windcrest in the fall of 1980, and remained for nine years. The church saw significant growth during Tom's tenure, adding the current sanctuary, Jones, and the McClung Building. Tom was named as District Superintendent of the Corpus Christi District before the actual completion of the sanctuary. The congregation responded by taking a panoramic photo for Tom on the first Sunday that the sanctuary was occupied. Tom served as Pastor Emeritus from 2008 until his death on July 16, 2012, ably assisted by his wife, Susie. The church purchased a casket pall in the memory of Rev. McClung.

Rev. Bill Huth replaced McClung as pastor, and served from 1989-1994. Bill had a love of theater, and a sincere and loving demeanor. Bill received an opportunity to serve as Chaplain to the YMCA of the Rockies in 1994, and continues to serve in that capacity today.

Rev. Bob Allen served the congregation from 1994 -1998, helping establish the church as a leader in the San Antonio area, and with his dynamic preaching welcomed some of the largest worshipping congregations in the history of the church.

Rev. Howard Surber (1998 – 2000). Howard worked at moving the church beyond its walls into the community at large.

Rev. Greg Hackett (2000 – 2008). Greg served the second longest tenure with eight years as a senior pastor of WUMC and led the church to its first million dollar budget, and the “footprint” of the church property increased as the church purchased the two buildings of eastern 2.2 acres of the Red Tree Shopping Center next door to the church in 2005. Two additional buildings and the remaining 5.1 acres of Red Tree were later purchased in 2007.

Dr. Lonnie Phillips (2008 – 2014). Lonnie’s passion in life is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and to help others discover their own ministry.

Rev. Terrence K. Hayes (2014-Present). Appointed at WUMC June 1, 2014, coming from Victoria as District Superintendent.

Associate Pastors who have served the church include:

- Rev. Ted Richardson, who founded ROOTS - our Senior Adult ministry.
- Joe Jones, who for a number of years served without salary.
- Ray Davis, who served the church for over 27 years (now Pastor Emeritus).
- Elia Torres, here for two years.
- Deacon Linda Gwathmey, who served here from 1999.
- Joan Ahrens (Part-Time Local Pastor), here since 2005.
- Germaine Tropez-Mathis, who joined in 2006 and currently the pastor of E.T. Dixon UMC.
- Tamara Strehli, who was appointed here in 2010 and served until .

Long-term Administrative and Programmatic Staff Include:

Marcy Williams, Director of Children’s Ministries (1993) - Church Administrator 2015

About the Windcrest “Open” Cross:



The special cross was designed by artist Bill Keen, husband of Linda Keen (former employee) especially for Windcrest United Methodist Church. The design is open through the center to let the winds of the Holy Spirit blow through. We also use the “Methodist” cross and flame, however certain trademark and copyright rules are in place for its proper use.



Recently, the Worship Work Area had the “Open Cross” digitized so that the custom embroidered upholstery for the Pastor’s chairs could be done. The digital file is available for use. The cross can also be given to you by e-mail or on disk. Currently we use both of the cross images you see here. The one on the bottom is an adaptation created by former member, Norm Steinbach.