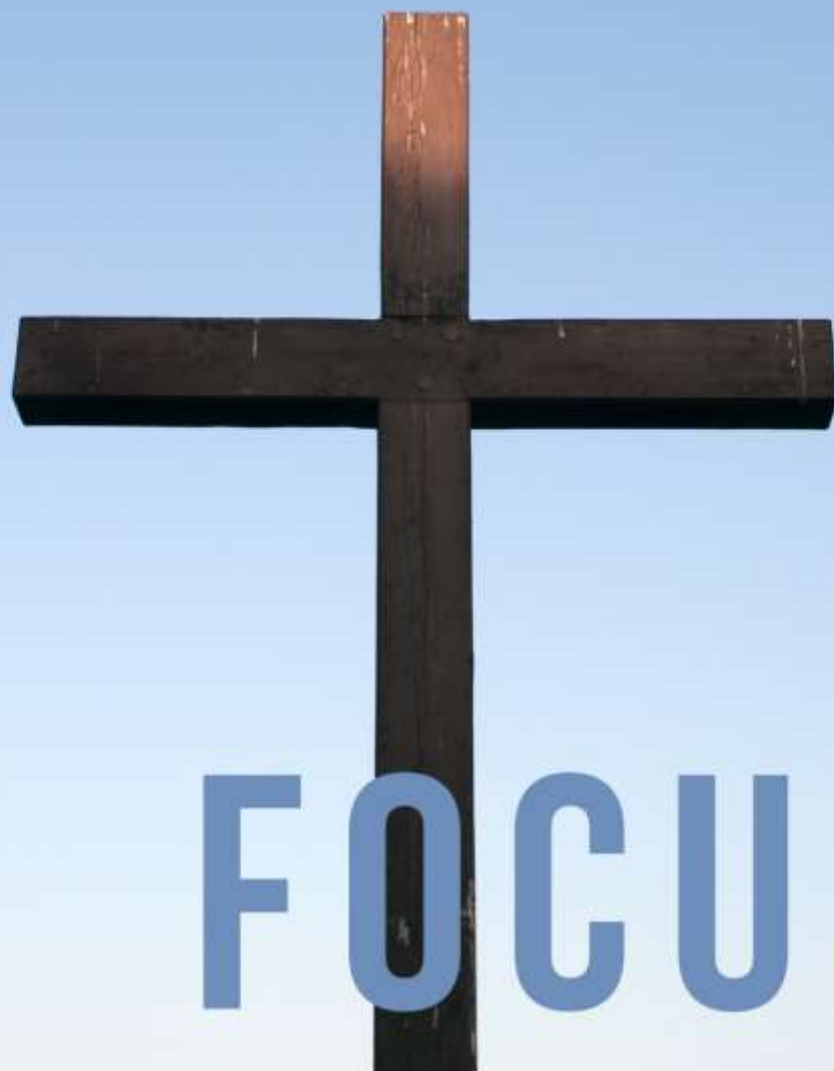


ST. JOHN'S UMC

July 2024 / Issue 7



FOCUS



“GOD DIDN’T GIVE US A SPIRIT THAT IS TIMID BUT ONE THAT IS POWERFUL, LOVING, AND SELF-CONTROLLED.” – II Timothy 1:7

Freedom in Christ

by Rev. Darren Walker

Freedom in Christ is an interesting phrase. It reminds me of a story I have shared before, usually on Ash Wednesday.

I was in seminary at the time, attending one of the weekly chapel services on campus. It was not my first Ash Wednesday service however, the Holy Spirit grabbed me and made it a pivotal one. I do not remember who was preaching or what was said. What I do remember is the weight of those ashes on my forehead. They marked me as a sinner. I was responsible for Jesus dying on the cross. It was plain for all to see, and the burden of causing so much pain and suffering was almost more than I could bear. For the rest of the day, I could not even look at a reflection of myself as I asked God to forgive me.

When it was time to get ready for bed, I went to wash off the ashes. As I stood in front of the mirror, I was shocked to see there was not a mark on my forehead. Sometime during the day, I had accidentally wiped or sweated away the ashes. Since He had my attention, God asked me “You knew I had forgiven you, why did you insist on carrying such a heavy burden of guilt and shame all day?”

Freedom in Christ is not just knowing but claiming the truth that Sin and Death no longer win. We are free from them. What holds us back is our refusing to accept God’s Forgiveness and insisting that we are still doomed. Hear the Good News. God knows you and God loves you. Christ died and was resurrected for us so that Sin and Death no longer get the final say in our lives. We are blessed to enjoy the freedom that comes from living in the United States. There is a cost to that freedom that has already been paid. The cost of Freedom in Christ is a cost that has also already been paid in full.

Grace and Peace,

Darren Walker

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July 2021 Events

- **Sundays: All Sunday School classes meeting in person**
- **Wednesdays: Fellowship Groups meeting via Google Meet or Zoom**
- **Thursdays: Every Day People Praise Band Practice in Family Life Center**
- **Thursdays: Disciple Bible Study in Family Life Center Room #114**
- **Monday, July 26: Single Board Meeting 6:00 PM in Sanctuary**

Children's Corner

Free As a Bird

by Kathryn Price, Director of Family Ministry

My upstairs window looks at the pecan tree in the backyard. Recently, I noticed a nest on a branch with a mother blue jay sitting on it. Over the next weeks, my husband and I watched and waited for the young chicks to hatch.

When they did, I could see three little heads vying for the food the parent birds brought. After a while I could count only two heads and one seemed to be getting more attention (and food) from the parent. Eventually, they got too big for the nest, but only one was strong enough to fly – the one who got fed more often.

This made me think how this is true in so many ways. That which we feed grows stronger whether it is physically, mentally, or spiritually.

So, I asked myself, What am I feeding my spirit? What do I do to strengthen my faith and trust in God?

Like the little bird that grew strong enough to leave the nest, my faith will give my spirit freedom to fly high.



Sunday School Is Back!

All Sunday school classes for children, youth, and adults are back in session on each Sunday morning from 9:45 - 10:00 AM. We are so excited to be back in person learning and having fellowship.

The nursery is open as well for church services and for Sunday school hour. We can't wait to see your littles!

If you are new to the church and need help finding a Sunday School class, please contact the front office at (512) 863-5886.

A promotional sign with a green top half and a red bottom half. The top half has the text 'WE'RE BACK!' in large white letters, followed by 'SUNDAY SCHOOL - 10AM' and '(AGE 3 - 5TH GRADE)'. The bottom half has 'NURSERY' in large white letters, followed by 'WORSHIP SERVICES 9:00 & 11:00' and 'AGE 5 AND UNDER'. Below this is a small illustration of a red barn with a white roof and a tree. At the bottom, it says 'WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S BARN' and '10:00 SUNDAY SCHOOL HOUR AGE 3 AND UNDER'.

A sign with a colorful, abstract background. The text 'Backpack Supply Run' is written in large, bold, black letters. Below it, the dates 'JULY 11 - AUGUST 1, 2021' are written in black. To the right of the text is a blue backpack filled with various school supplies like pens, pencils, and markers.

Christ's Saving Grace

by Carolyn Henry, Congregational Care Coordinator

Isn't it wonderful? The sanctuary is open for worship – the FLC is open for worship. We are free to attend either service – and we no longer have to wear a mask! We can sing, we can laugh, we can hug each other and visit. Last week we enjoyed communion together – and it was handed to us! What a wonderful feeling after a year of “lock down” And I wonder – did we take all these things for granted before? I certainly did and now I appreciate these freedoms so much more.

We are free too because of our faith in Jesus. We enjoy freedom from the slavery of sin, and freedom from the fear of death. We are told “.....I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more” Jeremiah 31:34

But with freedom comes responsibility. Even though we no longer wear masks, we aren't free to cough on someone, forget to wash our hands frequently, or show up for work or other activities if we have a fever. And we are not free to continue a sinful life. Paul says it best in Romans 6, when he wrote in verses 1 – 2: “What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? “ Since we are truly free, we can choose how we will serve Him. We can carve out time in our daily schedule to pray, read Scripture and devotionals, and serve in various ways in church and in the community. May we continue to be a witness to the freedom found only in Christ's saving grace.

The Mulch Men strike again. Thanks, I think, for the opportunity to spread to it around.

Thank you Lord for the partial cloud cover, and breeze, and the orange machine and its operator. I believe I see Ibuprofen or Ben Gay in my future!

Names of UMM members who helped to spread the mulch in the playground before VBC -

- Jim Leach
- Russ Schaeffer
- Walt Hancock
- Britt Thurman
- Dean May
- Charley Cherry



I Am Not Perfect

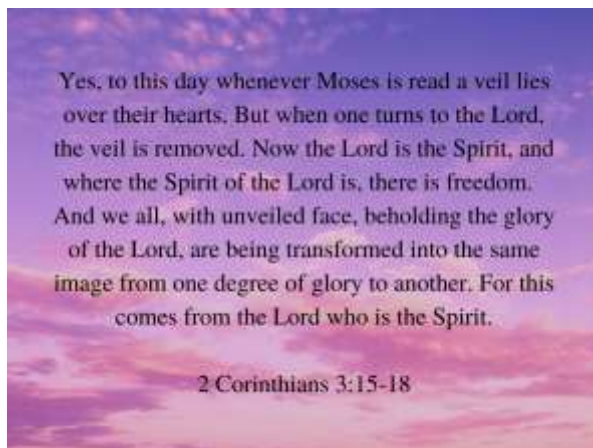
by Michelle Cousineau, Communications Coordinator

I am not perfect. I have never claimed to be perfect, which is good, because I know I cannot live up to the standard that Jesus set. However, in my journey to life with Christ, I have found freedom.

2 Corinthians 3:15 says, "Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts." The Israelites were enslaved by the law of Moses. They could never reconcile that Jesus gave them freedom to follow their laws with grace and truth rather than rigid rule. After all, Jesus said he did not come to abolish the law, but to fulfill the law (Matt 5:17). I spent a lot of years of my life trying to follow the "law" and always coming up short. Growing up French Roman Catholic tends to have you believing that you will never be good enough to be in the glory of the LORD. I walked a desert that I pray my children will never have to walk. I, like the Israelites, had a veil laying over my heart and it was dark and scary. But Paul does not stop there. He lets the Corinthians know in verse 16-17 "But when one turns to the LORD, the veil is removed. Now the LORD is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the LORD is, there is freedom."

Those words make my heart smile because I know that walking with Christ and living in Christ gives me a freedom that this world can not match. While I am still not perfect, in the freedom of Christ, I know that I am forgiven and loved. I walk this journey of faith daily, making mistakes along the way, following the "law" with truth and grace to the best of my ability, and knowing that through the love and grace of Jesus Christ, I will see the glory of the LORD and be welcomed into His presence. I have found a simple peace in this fact. The fears of this world do not have the same hold on me they used to, and I can now live in this world and not be of this world.

As you contemplate your freedom in Christ, how are you letting go of the fears in this world and showing the rest of this world how freeing our Christ can be?



As liaison for Travis & Lara, I wanted to let you know that you can keep up to date on what is happening from Lara & Travis themselves by going to [Travis | CaringBridge](#).

This site is being used as a journal and to leave well wishes and messages for Travis as he battles with "Bobby Boucher." Lara & Travis truly thank you for your love and prayers. If you need more information, please contact Michelle Cousineau at commsec@stjohnsumc.cc.

Financial News

2021 YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIALS

2021 Income \$198,058

2021 Expense \$217,151

Net (\$19,093)



Prayer Team Note

by Martha Arizpe, Prayer Team Chairperson



As Americans, we have a constitution which very handily lists for us in the first amendment the many freedoms granted to us. These include freedom of speech, religion, the press, peaceful assembly and right to petition. Over the centuries, we have managed to get very creative with the First Amendment. I doubt that our forefathers considered the possibility of things like publicly lying for personal gain; changing Scripture to fit a social lifestyle; printing any nonsense we choose, no matter how hurtful; public rioting; and petitioning for non-essentials when essentials are staring us in the face. By comparison, our Christianity grants us freedom in Christ, our Savior, whose love for us supersedes any freedom granted us by the world. And that beautiful truth can be hard for mere mortals to grasp. While we readily acknowledge that we have been granted all the freedoms listed in the constitution, we tend to question our individual worthiness. So, our faith stands up and shouts these precious words from John 3:16 - "FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE". Cannot top that.

Blessings,
Martha Arizpe

CHRIST CARING FOR PEOPLE THROUGH PEOPLE



**STEPHEN
MINISTRY**

That's the motto of Stephen Ministry. The Stephen Minister's role is to bring God's love into the lives of people who are going through a difficult time or experiencing a crisis. What do Stephen Ministers do? They listen, care, support, encourage, and pray with and for a person who is hurting. And in the midst of this confidential, one-to-one, caring relationship, God's healing love comes pouring through.

If someone you know is facing a crisis—large or small—and could benefit from the caring presence of a Stephen Minister, talk to one of our Stephen Leaders: Judy Conner, Carrie Godward, or Dayne Carlson. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to care for you!

Do you like to sing or play an instrument? Do you enjoy ringing bells? Would serving the church through music in worship be something that excites you? Well, we have some great opportunities for you to get involved.

The St. John's Ringers are always looking for people who want to learn how to play bells and have fun. This group meets to practice on Wednesday nights at 6:15 PM in the Family Life Center. For more information, contact Chris Baker at chancelchoir@stjohnsumc.cc.

Maybe singing or playing in a band is more your style. The Every Day People Praise Band is looking for singers or instrumentalists to join the band. You do not have to have any prior experience, just a love for music and a love for showing it off to God. For more information, contact David Pencil at music@stjohnsumc.cc.

"Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! Praise him with clanging cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!" ~Psalm 150:3-5

Quilter's Are Back!

by Patty Lee

The St. John's quilters are eager to welcome the old gang back to quilting, as well as anyone interested in this historical art form. Several of our members have moved on, and we are looking for beginners as well as "seasoned" quilters. Our beautiful projects are sold to benefit the missions and ministries of St. John's. This congenial group (men are welcome, too), meet each Monday afternoon at 1 pm at the Horizon house, beginning on June 14th This is Flag Day, and we will be making preparations for the new season. Remember, as usual, all are welcome. Interested? Call Patty Lee at 512-863-6758. You do not have to be a St. John's member to participate.



Catch all the Ms. Kathryn & Boomer episodes on

- **St. John's Barn Facebook Page:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stjohnsbarn>
- **St. John's United Methodist Church YouTube Page**
- **St. John's website:** www.stjohnsumc.cc



Church Mission Week Monday, August 2-6, 2021 8:30 AM - 2:00 PM

We are gearing up for Mission Week with our youth and YOU!

We are looking for both volunteers and jobs to do for you. Types of things we can assist with include:

- Painting (you supply paint)
- Yard Work
- Clean up around (your choice)
- Organization of (your choice)

Types of volunteer jobs include:

- Work group leader
- Driver
- Kitchen/Meal Prep
- Financial
- Games
- Devotional

At the end of the week on Friday August 6, 2021 we will have a Night of Celebration that will include a short worship service, dinner together, movie, games, and an ice cream social!



He-Brews Coffee is open on Sunday mornings

Coffee time is here again! The following is a monthly Sunday School rotation schedule where a few members of the class will come in early to make coffee, monitor the thermoses and then clean up afterwards.

Here is the proposed procedure. Coffee to be made about 8:45 before the 9:00 service. 2 regulars and 1 decaf. The coffee will remain very hot and fresh for several hours. Then someone needs to check before Sunday School hour to see if more thermoses need to be made. Then if someone from the class could stay just 10 or 15 minutes after the 11:00 service to make sure folks in there have had a chance to get some. After that thermoses rinsed out left open to air dry on the counter. Counters wiped down and filters thrown in the trash can.

July - Homebuilders

August - Seekers

September - New Beginnings

ST. JOHN'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

St. John's has been a part of the Georgetown Community for over 140 years.

We started as a group of Swedish immigrants who joined together in their homes to study, worship and pray and built our first church building in 1882. At that time, we were known as the Swedish Methodist Episcopal Brushy Church (Svenska Metodistkyrkan at Brushy).

The original church stood at the intersection of Westinghouse Road and FM 1460. Our church cemetery is still at this location.

In 1906 we moved to town, to our present home at 311 E. University Avenue, and in 1938 we changed our name to St. John's Methodist Church.

In 1968, when the Methodist Church joined with the Evangelical United Brethren Church, St. John's became St. John's United Methodist Church.

Come join us and share in our rich history and heritage of celebrating God's love.



St. John's United Methodist Church
311 E. University Avenue
Georgetown, TX 78626
Phone: 512-863-5886
Website: www.stjohnsumc.cc
Office Hours: Mon-Thur 8:30 AM—4:30 PM
Food Pantry Hours: Wednesdays 2:00 PM—4:00 PM

Follow us on    

