

St. John's Focus

June 2020



“THEREFORE, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, HOLY PARTNERS IN A HEAVENLY CALLING, CONSIDER JESUS, THE APOSTLE AND HIGH PRIEST OF OUR CONFESSION.” ~Hebrews 3:1

Called

by Rev. Darren Walker

I was called into the ordained ministry at an early age. However, I resisted that call until I was in my twenties. It was not until my pastor and certain life events happened to me that I was finally able to answer God’s call. It changed my life.

My father was an electrical engineer. He was also a committed Christian who taught Bible studies, Sunday School and occasionally spoke in church. He was always quietly helping people behind the scenes. I asked my mother if Daddy had ever thought of entering the ordained ministry. She laughed and said “Yes but he realized he was more effective being a lay person.” Later, I realized, Mama was talking about my Daddy’s calling. While he was not called to be an ordained minister, he was called to minister to others.

Have you heard your calling from God? It is not necessarily your profession or career. As my pastor told me, “If you can do anything else and be happy and fulfilled, don’t go into the ordained ministry.” This surprised me since he had been recruiting me for several years and I was about to be ordained a deacon. He went on to say, “However, if you are called into the ordained ministry, you

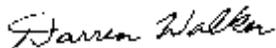
cannot do anything else and be happy and fulfilled.” It took a few years but I finally understood what he was saying.

Your calling is what God has specifically created and formed you to be and do to share Christ’s Love with other people. You have skills and abilities, talents, that will make it possible for you to share in that way. When you do, you will know joy and satisfaction. You will also be sharing Christ’s love in significant ways.

Let me share some examples of people I have known who have found their calling. I know a nurse who discovered she was an incredible Sunday School teacher with youth. I know a mechanic who found his calling was helping older ladies keep their cars running smoothly and their air conditioners conditioning. There was the retired woman who discovered a passion for feeding the homeless. There was the fisherman who discovered he could reach troubled young people by teaching them to fish. None of these people attended seminary or were ordained, but all of them had significant ministries. They had an impact for Christ on many lives.

Do you know your calling? Have you asked God to share it with you? You may need to get some help from people who know and love you to help you hear God’s answer. I do know, when you find your calling from God and live into it, you will know joy and wholeness. You will also be helping to transform the world.

Grace and Peace,



P.S. If you think God may be calling you into the ordained ministry, please let me know. I would love to talk with you about that.

June Calendar of Events

- **Sundays: Sunday school classes meeting via Google Meet or Zoon**
- **Sunday, June 7: Drive-In Communion Service**
- **Monday, June 22: Single Board Meeting via Google Meet**
- **Wednesdays: Fellowship Groups meeting via Google Meet or Zoom**

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Spotlight on Rejeanna Fraser & Melanie Noles

by Dorothy Newcombe

Sisters Rejeanna Fraser and Melanie Noles quite literally grew up in St John's. Their mother, Joe Ann Frayer, was at the church every day working in one capacity or another while her daughters scampered about from the Sanctuary, to the corridors of Fellowship Hall, to the playground which was, back then, a simple swing set next to the Magnolia tree.

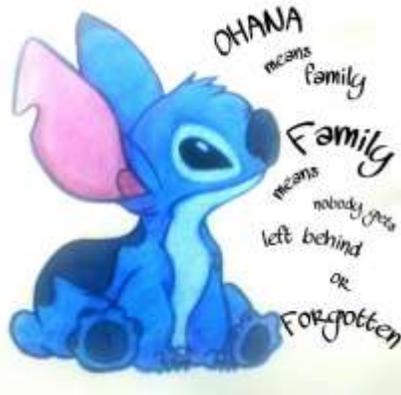
Joe Ann gave much to St John's, but perhaps her most enduring contribution was our now treasured tradition of the Chrismons Tree. Joe Ann marshaled a handful of UMW members, and together they fashioned and stitched the first Chrismon Symbols to decorate our Sanctuary tree.

Rejeanna and Melanie inherited many of Joe Ann's characteristics and are now ranking members of their seriously close-knit family. What these folks do collectively is Work, Share, Give, Repeat. In their view, family expands beyond blood relations to encompass church membership as well as whomsoever else in the broader community may wish or need inclusion, and gathering together for a meal is their ultimate expression of love. It was this mindset which, in the early 1990's, inspired Rejeanna to approach the then pastor's wife with her idea. Why not feed EVERYONE? It seemed right, in fact, imperative. Wesley Value Meals was born.

During "normal times" the sisters food shop together Monday and Tuesday in preparation for Wednesday which they dedicate to preparing Value Meals for an estimated one hundred participants. They man the pits at Harvest Fest, prepare our Old-Fashioned Christmas Dinner, cook Valentine's Banquet, and oversee Live Nativity.

Here's an amazing tidbit - together they can name, in sequence, all of St John's pastors from childhood days to present, including one individual whose service spanned a brief 24-hours. Shazam!





Called to Disciple

by Andrew Taylor, Director of Youth Ministry

Whenever I undertake a project, I begin by asking "What is the purpose of this?" or "What are we trying to accomplish?" This is an important question for a myriad of reasons, and an important one to revisit occasionally to make sure that the project is accomplishing the goal rather than existing without one ("just spinning my wheels" as Mom would say).

Since I've spent my entire life in, around, and leading ministry in various capacities, I've had a lot of opportunities to ask this question about the Church and Christianity, and the answer that I return to over and over is that we are called to walk humbly with God, and realize the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. Jesus tells us that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand (Matt 4:17), in our midst even now (Luke 17:20-21), grows from the smallest of things like a mustard seed (Luke 13:18-19), is worked into the world like yeast into dough (Luke 13:20-21), and the end state of our world (Rev 21).

Over my years in ministry, I've been blessed with glimpses of the Kingdom, most commonly on mission trips, put there to be seen (if we have eyes to see) any time we emulate Jesus by sacrificing ourselves for the love of our neighbors. I can tell you that there is inexplicable joy in the Kingdom, unparalleled beauty, and a lot of laughter. I want that all the time for everyone, everywhere. That is my calling. As the United Methodist Church puts it, I am called to "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

Youth ministry is where I first saw the Kingdom, and where I have been best equipped to realize the call to build the Kingdom, but is ultimately a tool to answer that call, not the call itself. As a disciple of Jesus Christ, what is your call, and how do you realize it?

Families are Called Too!

by Kathryn Price, Director of Family Ministry

Many families are called to serve as missionaries around the world. The Methodist church supports missions in many countries to many needy communities.

But you don't have to go very far to help children find their calling to help others right in their own communities. As a family, choose a non-profit charity in Williamson County that your child/children have

an interest in or would like to know more about. Call, visit or go online and learn how your kids can help in an age-appropriate way.

Some possibilities might be: Wilco Animal Shelter, Public Library, battered women's shelters, food banks and homeless shelters to name a few.

God's call can come at any stage of life. Teach your children to listen for God's call for them.



Prayer Is a Gift

by Johnnie Kovar, Property & Building Manager

On April 25, 2020, mine and Gary's life was turned upside down. My grandson, Luke Steven Laas, was born and is such a blessing, really a miracle baby for us. My daughter, Meagan could have died if she hadn't given birth when she did. Then, on May 7, 2020 my niece Ronnie was murdered by her husband, which we probably won't get

justice on this earth. I can't say in words how much all the gifts and prayers are appreciated and needed. I could not have made it through this past month without our Lord and Savior, my husband, and your prayers. Thank you again for all the kindness, help, gifts, and most of all, prayers. Prayer is truly the best gift of all. God is good, all the time!

God Has Other Plans

by JoAnne Gaytan, Nursery Manager & Children's Coordinator

I thought I would love to work in missions and music when I was younger and envisioned getting involved in our new church. God had other plans. I had to be "pushed" (or shoved?) since just putting me in place and then nudging me didn't do the trick. God has gradually prepared me for the work I do now ever since he plopped me in the middle of a crowd full of loud, messy kids whose teacher was ill one Sunday and told me to teach them. It's definitely not glamorous work. I surely did not want to struggle through the muck and chaos of little kids when I had two little kids of my own at home.

But, as God was calling me, (although I could have sworn it was our Christian Education Director's voice on the phone pleading with me to help), I said yes because I knew the help was needed. I could find and get involved with my "real calling" later. As my kids grew, I ended up helping in whatever area my kids were participating. I became a Sunday School

teacher, a 4th/5th grade fellowship group leader, children's choir helper, and whatever else I was nearby as it was being staffed. All of a sudden, I was director of VBS for 3 years (with 300+ kids!), Chair of our Children's Council, and my kids were going into Youth. Time to transfer responsibilities and move on to help the youth! (*insert sound of brakes squealing*) The entire time my kids were in youth, I helped with just a few activities. I could never seem to find a transition point, either to another leader, or from my favorite children's ministry projects.

Outside of church, during all of this time, I was a substitute teacher for 10 years, which taught me "creative" discipline and how to work with kids of different ages. During this time, my daughter was very involved in theatre, which I helped with often. When you work with theatre, you quickly learn not to freak out when things don't go as planned. When I had one child in college, and one in high

school, I started teaching preschool which forced and taught me to increase my patience.

I (finally) had that "aha" moment that working with God's children and families is what He had planned for me. (only took me almost 20 years!) And look at all the prep work He gave me to help with the best job in the world that I have now. I love teaching kids about God! I just hope He doesn't decide to call me somewhere else after this, because I am apparently a slow learner.

God's purpose for you in His ministry is about what He needs us to do. You just have to say ok and obey Him. It often changes as circumstances change, and it might just be something you have no interest in. One thing that God has told us ALWAYS to do, though, is to use the gifts He gives us to help others. (1 Peter 4:10) No matter who the "other" is, we are to serve God by helping them. It's easy enough to start answering His call with that.



Life the Hard Way

by Michelle Cousineau, Communications Coordinator & Executive Secretary

My parents got divorced when I was 12 years old and I decided that God didn't love me or my family, so I shouldn't have to listen to Him. Yeah, I was that kid. The one who did everything in life the hard way and then wondered why I was never happy or life was never easy.

So, there I was going about my life and not listening at all to God's call on my life. I drifted from job to job, never really feeling like I had a purpose. I wondered why on earth I was even here. After some time, I figured I was meant to be a secretary, so I did that for a long time. Then I got it into my brain that I was supposed to be a bartender. HA! That was a ride at 40 years old. Yes, a bartender at 40. I can tell you that being a bartender IS a young person's game. Then one

day, Pastor Travis hired me to be the office assistant here at St. John's. I was once again a secretary, but this time it felt right. I felt at home here and like I was supposed to be here.

Then, my position changed again and I became the communications coordinator and executive secretary to the Pastor. It was the communications side of my job that I suddenly realized I was supposed to be doing all along. It was in communications that I finally felt I was using the gifts God gave me the way He wanted me to use them. It took me 40 years of doing life the hard way, but I finally listened to God's call and life is much easier.



My Calling: Music

by David Pencil, Director of Music Ministries

As we think on God's calling upon our lives this month, I think back to a special moment in my own career as a music minister. I was in high school, participating in the contemporary band at the church I attended, and a worship conference was held there that involved sessions on music in church and culminated with an evening of worship performed by the leaders of the conference. I remember sitting in the pew and feeling this powerful sense that "music" was the area my life was to focus on. I didn't know exactly what that would look like, but I did know that it meant pouring my efforts into developing my craft and serving others through music. For all the years since then, I have been living out that calling, whether as a composer, teacher, or music minister. It has been a great

joy in my life to discover all the ways God has and continues to use this blessing of music in me to touch the lives of others. Even in the midst of this pandemic, my experience in home studio recording has played an important role in being able to provide high quality music for our remote worship services.

For those in our congregation who have found and followed their calling through life, I encourage you to look back and rejoice at all the ways God has used you to touch the lives of others. And for those who are still searching for their own calling, I hope this testimony inspires and emboldens you to listen for God's call, for when we walk in His path we discover new joys every day.

Women's Bible Study Devotional

by Jessica Long, Original Post Heather F.

Have you ever noticed how in the Scriptures men are always going up into the mountains to commune with the Lord?

Yet in the scriptures we hardly ever hear of women going to the mountains. But we know why — right?

Because the women were too busy keeping life going; they couldn't abandon

babies, meals, homes, fires, gardens, and a thousand responsibilities to make the climb into the mountains!

I was talking to a friend the other day, saying that as modern woman I feel like I'm never "free" enough from my responsibilities, never in a quiet enough space I want with God.

Her response floored me, "That is

why God comes to women. Men have to climb the mountain to meet God, but God comes to women where ever they are."

I have been pondering on her words for weeks and have searched my scriptures to see that what she said is true. God does in deed come to women where they are, when they are doing their ordinary, everyday work.

He meets them at the wells where they draw water for their families, in their homes, in their kitchens, in their gardens.

He comes to them as they sit beside sickbeds, as they give birth, care for the elderly, and perform necessary mourning and burial rites.

Even at the empty tomb, Mary was the first to witness Christ's

resurrection, she was there because she was doing the womanly chore of properly preparing Christ's body for burial.

In these seemingly mundane and ordinary tasks, these women of the scriptures found themselves face to face with divinity.

So, if — like me — you ever start to bemoan the fact that you don't have as much time to spend in the mountains with God as you would like. Remember, God comes to women. He knows where we are and the burdens we carry. He sees us, and if we open our eyes and our hearts we will see Him, even in the most ordinary places and in the most ordinary things.

He lives. And he's using a time such as this to speak to women around the world.

Jesus Calls Us

by Carolyn Henry, Congregational Care Coordinator

Lately the words of the old hymn "Jesus Calls Us" have been going through my mind. This is a familiar hymn, and the first verse goes:

Jesus Calls Us, O'er the tumult, Of our
lives' wild, restless sea, Day by day
His sweet voice soundeth, Saying,
"Christian, follow me"

I think what has stuck in my mind is that we are now living in what can be described as a time of tumult. "Tumult" is defined as "A situation of confusion and chaos, especially when there is a lot of loud noise involved".

If you listen to the news, you know that its "Loud noise" seems to get worse every day. We hear of so many people sick, so many deaths, so many unemployed, so many waiting for hours in food lines. This is happening all over the world.

I believe Jesus calls us, as Christians, to be steadfast, faithful, and full of hope during this time. To continue praying - for the world, the country, and for each other - to continue reading and studying the Bible, and to continue to listen for His voice telling us how to reach out and help others. And in the words of St. Peter "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have"

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

To me, the last verse of "Jesus Calls Us" is even more meaningful in today's world.

Jesus calls us! By Thy mercies, Savior,
may we hear Thy call, Give our hearts
to Thine obedience, Serve and love
Thee best of all.



Prayer Team Note

by Martha Arizpe, Prayer Team Chairperson

June is the month designated to honor fathers. Fathers are such a necessity – not only to mothers and children, but to the world in general. Fathers represent strength and stability, something every child needs. Once, as a young Girl Scout, my troop went on an overnight camping trip. We had cabins to sleep in, which was great. Unfortunately for my “little girl” self, we also had “night noises” that I was not

familiar with. Our leader allowed each of us to bring a small suitcase, which was stored underneath our bunks. I brought an old one that belonged to my Dad. When the noises scared me so much that I could not sleep, I just reached my hand down and held on to my suitcase, and whispered to the Boogey Man: “My Daddy is in this suitcase, he is 6 feet 3 ½ inches tall, and he loves me a lot. You should go.” It

worked like a charm, probably because I knew it was true. I do something similar as an adult. When worries attack and sleep eludes me, I grab my Bible and tell Satan: “My God is here, He is stronger than anything, and He loves me a lot. You should go.” Still works like a charm.

Blessings and Happy Father’s Day,

Martha Arizpe

Called to Stephen Ministry

by Judy Conner, Stephen Minister Co-Chairperson

For me, being a Stephen Minister is an answer to prayer. After I retired from full time work, I was searching for something meaningful to do that would feel fulfilling. I read a book called "A Purpose Driven Life" by Rick Warren. It's message to me was, if you are seeking God's will for your life, you should figure out what gives you the most joy. Well, I prayed about it and did some soul searching. I found that working with and listening to people was what had made me feel the best about myself.

Around that time. I heard about Stephen Ministry for the first time. It was already an active ministry at St. John's, but I didn't know anything about it. For me, it was obvious that God had been at work leading me to this ministry. I took the training. As I went to visit my first care receiver, I prayed that God would put His words in my mouth. That was the beginning of the most wondrous relationship that I have grown into with God. It has been the most heart warming experience of my life to leave a visit

A Stephen Minister is a person trained to provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care to hurting people. This is a vital ministry within St. John’s Church filled with compassionate people who serve the hurting within our church.

If you or someone you know need to speak with a care giver, please contact Judy Conner at campkidjudy@gmail.com, Carrie Godward at carrieg.palmpre@gmail.com, or Dayne Carlson at dmcarlson@suddenlink.net and they will be happy to serve you in this way.

Likewise, if you feel called to become a caregiver for Stephen’s Ministry, please contact Judy, Carrie, or Dayne and they will help you with getting you started in this rewarding ministry.



Administrative News

APRIL 2020 FINANCIALS

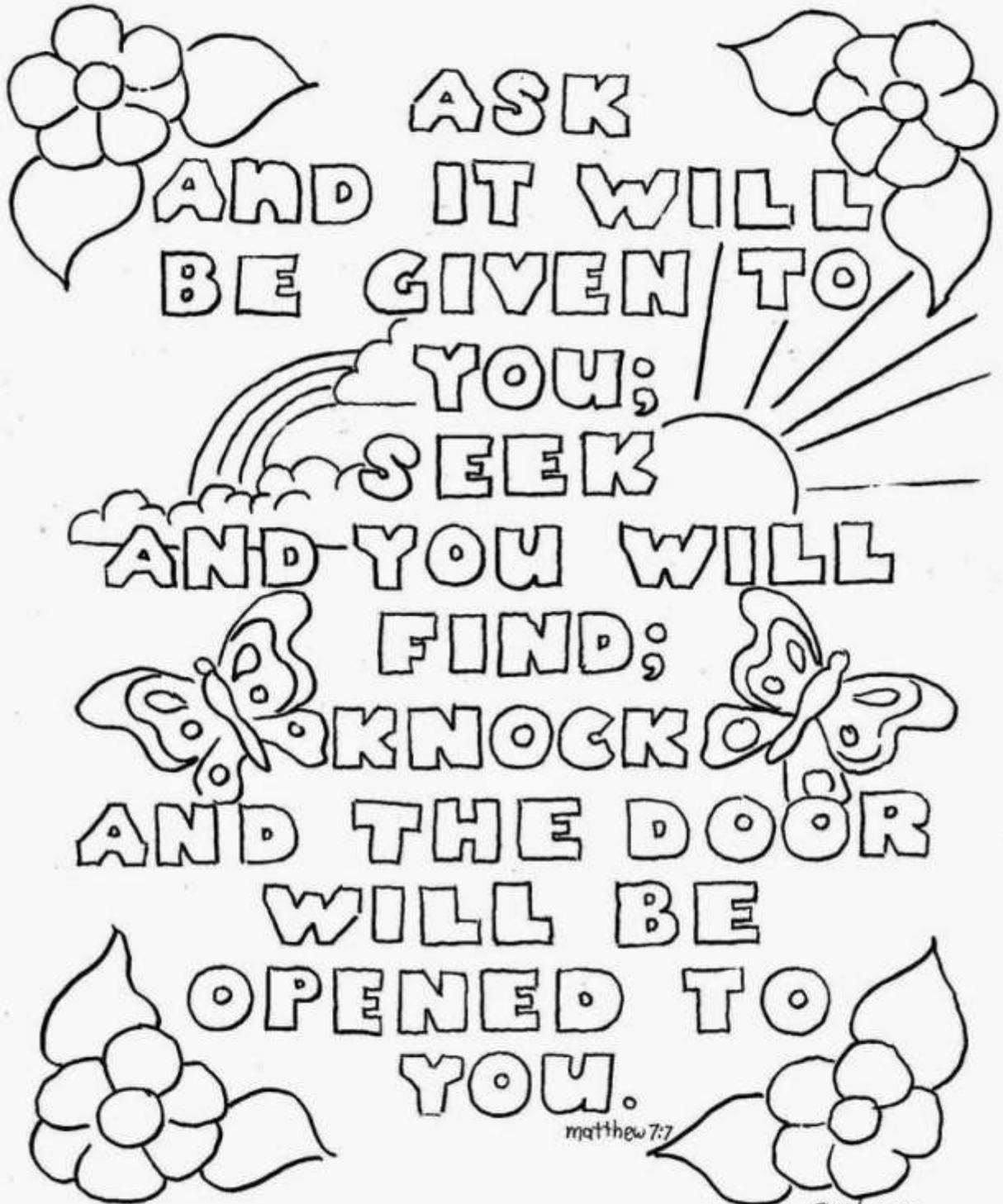
2020 Income \$198,111
2020 Expense \$191,230
Net **+\$6,881**



Even though we can't meet in person, we are still meeting online. Please be sure to get your attendance numbers to Christine for all your virtual and in person meetings. Send to officemanager@stjohnsumc.cc

Join us in the back parking lot and tune your radio to 88.9 FM





ASK
AND IT WILL
BE GIVEN TO
YOU;
SEEK
AND YOU WILL
FIND;
KNOCK
AND THE DOOR
WILL BE
OPENED TO
YOU.

matthew 7:7

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But Whom Do You Say That I AM?

E T A C O V D A E W H
 R U R E T S A M F O G
 A V R S U S E J L N O
 W R E T M W A Y I C L
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Advocate
 Almighty
 Alpha and Omega
 Amen
 Apostle
 Beloved Son
 Bishop
 Branch
 Bread
 Captain
 Carpenter
 Chosen
 Christ
 Consolation
 Cornerstone
 Counselor
 Day Star
 Deliverer

Door
 Emmanuel
 Everlasting
 Faithful and True
 First and Last
 Forerunner
 Foundation
 Governor
 Head
 High Priest
 Holy and Just One
 Horn of Salvation
 I AM
 Jesus
 Judge
 King
 King of Kings
 Lamb of God

Lawgiver
 Life
 Light
 Lion of Judah
 Lord
 Lord of Lords
 Master
 Master
 Mediator
 Messiah
 Mighty God
 Morning Star
 Nazarene
 Only Begotten Son
 Passover
 Priest
 Prince of Peace
 Prophet

Redeemer
 Resurrection
 Rock
 Savior
 Servant
 Shepherd
 Son of David
 Son of God
 Son of Man
 Vine
 Way
 Wonderful
 Word

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.



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