

ST. JOHN'S UMC



LOVE
GOD.
LOVE
OTHERS.

October 2021 / Issue 10

FOCUS



“YOU WILL BE MADE RICH IN EVERY WAY SO THAT YOU CAN BE GENEROUS IN EVERY WAY”
~ II Corinthians 9:11a

Words Matter

by Rev. Darren Walker

Dear Church Family,

Words matter. When we say things out loud, they start to become true. How we define our words defines us. Defining prayer as a conversation is more helpful and more accurate than just calling it a duty. Another word for Stewardship is Gratitude. This, too, is more helpful and more accurate than saying it is just a Finance Campaign.

When we join the church, we promise to support our church with our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Are you following through? Do you talk with God about our church? Do you show up for worship and service projects, Sunday School, and mission work? Do you sing in the choir, cook for those who need a hot meal, organize a committee, teach our young people? How do you share your gifts and talents? How do you care for and serve the people in the church family? How do you care for and serve the people outside our church family as you proclaim the Risen Christ and share the Gospel?

Stewardship is our way of showing our gratitude to God for the love God shows us every day as we keep the promises we made when we joined the church. What we do does make a difference. I knew a man who came to church, alone, every Sunday because he believed it was important for young men to see old men in church, worshipping. I knew a woman who decided she would send cards to the children in our Sunday School who were absent or sick or having a birthday. These are two examples of people, being good stewards, not because of guilt or arm twists. They were sharing God’s Love in ways that they could do so. They remembered the membership promises included the word “and” and not the word “or.”

Please take a moment to think about what God is doing in your life. Then think about how you can best respond to say, “Thank you.”

Grace and Peace,

Darren Walker

October 2021 Events

- Friday, October 1 - Saturday, October 2: Poptober Fest Parking Lot Fundraiser
- Friday, October 8: MOPS Meeting in Fellowship Hall
- Monday, October 11: Church Office Closed
- Tuesday, October 12: UMM Meeting in Family Life Center
- Saturday, October 16: Youth Mock-In Halloween Party
- Thursday, October 19: UMW Meeting in Fellowship Hall
- Monday, October 25: Single Board Meeting 6:00 PM in Sanctuary
- Sunday, October 31: 5th Sunday Worship Service in Sanctuary
- Sunday, October 31: Trunk or Treat in St. John’s Parking Lot

Weekly Events

Sundays:

Traditional Worship 9:00 AM
Sunday School 10:00 AM
Blended Worship 11:00 AM

Mondays:

Prayer Team Meeting 9:30 AM
Quilters Meeting 1:00 PM
Further’s Emmaus Group 5:00 PM

Tuesdays:

Strong Bones 10:00 AM
Grace Co-Op Band Class 10:30 AM

Wednesdays:

Small Group - Cherry’s 6:00 PM
St. John’s Ringers Rehearsal 6:15 PM
St. John’s Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Support Group 7:00 PM

Thursdays:

Strong Bones 10:00 AM
Disciple Bible Study Group 6:30 PM
Everyday Praise Band Rehearsal 6:30 PM
Living Solutions 7:00 PM

Fridays:

Crafters Meeting 1:00 PM

Saturdays:

Eye of the Storm Reunion Group 7:30 AM
Saturday Morning Support Group 9:30 AM

Share Your French Fries

by Carolyn Henry, Congregational Care Coordinator

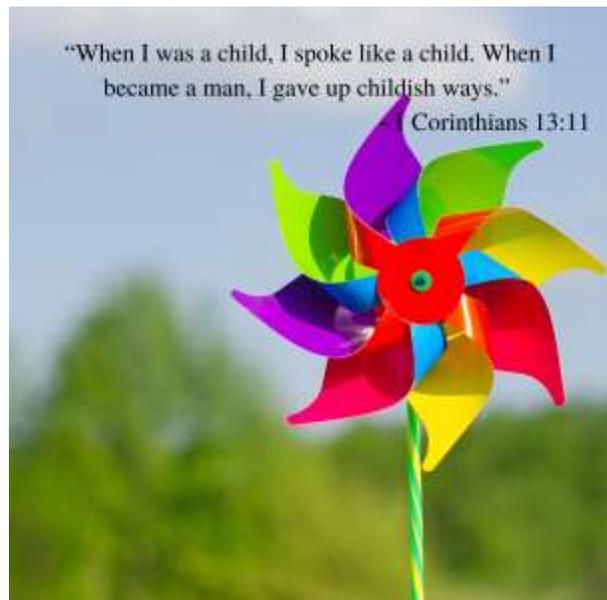
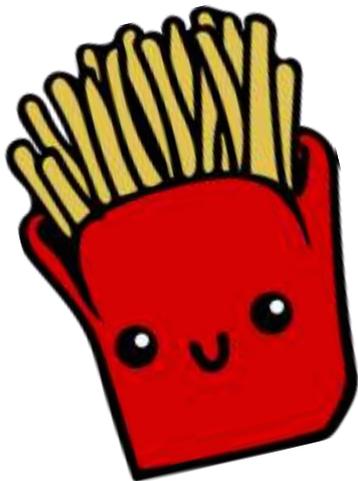
A number of years ago, Rev. Arcynthia Louie from our sister church St. Paul's, was guest speaker at our church. I remember her message very well. She told a story about a young boy and his father, who took him to see a ball game. The father purchased some French fries from a vendor, and gave them to the young son. After a while the father asked the child if he could have a couple of French fries. The young child refused to share the fries with his father. "No" he said – "They're mine!"

Of course the point was that many times we are like that child. Even though everything we have is given to us from God, "Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it" Deuteronomy 10:14, often we refuse to give anything back. I'm not even talking about 10% - anything. We say "Oh Lord, not this month – I have too many bills to pay" Who among us has not been guilty of that? We justify this by thinking we work hard for our income, and so we deserve to keep it. But who gives us the strength and wherewithal to earn that income? We could do nothing without God, who provides for us and gives us strength.

It's not just about giving money. It's also our time, service, and witness.

I have used these excuses "I don't have time to call this one or visit that one. I need to finish my yard work today." Or – I don't really want to ask that person about their faith - they might laugh at me, or get angry." Or – "I really don't have time to serve on that committee. Besides I don't care for the other people who are on it." Or – "I'm running late this morning – no time to spend in prayer".

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13:11 "When I was a child, I spoke like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways." We are no longer children. It's time for all to grow up and give back part of our French fries. Give back to God what is already God's. He will richly bless us. He's already doing that!



Children Love Presents/ Presence

by Kathryn Price, Director of Family Ministry

All children love to receive presents! Birthday presents, Christmas presents, surprise presents ... any kind of gift makes them smile. It really doesn't matter if it's large or small, expensive or not, it really is the thought that counts with children.

The simple fact that you cared enough to think about them means so much! That's true for older kids as well. It is always nice to know someone values us.

But there are other gifts that mean a lot to children. In many cases the "gift" of your presence is worth more than anything you can buy. Just being there shows that you care enough to spend your time, energy and attention to nurture and encourage them.

The children of St. John's need you. They need adults who are willing to "be there" for them as they learn and grow. You don't need to be a teacher or have any special training to just show up and listen. We need people to volunteer to help with Sunday School for all ages.

Please pray about where God can use you and the gift of your presence to help the youth and children of our church.



Check out all of the St. John's Barn Children's Moment Videos on our [YouTube Channel](#) and our [St. John's Website](#).

Boomer and Ms. Kathryn will see you there!

Passing On the Passion for Worship

by David Pencil, Director of Music Ministry

While we consider our own personal stewardship of our resources and talents, it is also important to remember that we as the church body share in the stewardship of the life and growth of our congregation. We are eager to see the next generation rise up to honor Jesus; to grow strong in study, prayer, and witness; to develop perseverance in hardship and a passion for worship within themselves. Focusing in on this last point, how exactly do we ensure that we are passing on a passion for worship to the next generation?

First, we can set an example for those around us that participation in worship matters, and that we are called to do more than simply attend. We make it a priority to regularly participate in worship, and to focus our hearts and minds through music, prayer, scripture, and sermon on the ministry of the Holy Spirit to our souls. If we can share our time and talents to play a part in worship leadership, whether through singing, playing an instrument, serving as an acolyte, usher, lay leader, or any other way we might be of service, we don't just wait for someone to ask us to help, but rather proactively seek out opportunities to participate.

Second, we can promote the concept of "content over medium." That is, we affirm that what is truly essential is the content that is being conveyed, whether through song, sermon, or other means. The medium through which that content comes may be varied, and sometimes its style may be unfamiliar or less preferable to some, but if the content has value, then we should be accepting of it, regardless of the medium through which it is conveyed. In song, this works both ways. Those who prefer the more traditional medium of hymnody should be open to embracing contemporary praise music that communicates valuable spiritual content, and conversely, those who prefer praise music should be open to embracing hymnody that communicates valuable spiritual content. When we all have a "content over medium" attitude in worship, we allow a variety of stylistic perspectives to be represented, and that can have a significant impact on helping members of the younger generation feel like their cultural language is relevant in the church, while still honoring our heritage.

Finally, we can engage with individuals and families in our community and demonstrate our passion for worship by offering our enthusiastic invitation for them to join us at church. Simply asking "do you have a church home?" can make big a difference.

So, lets recommit as a church family to being good stewards of the life and growth of our congregation, and pass on our passion for worship to others!



The Answer to Stewardship

by Christine Studebaker, Office Manager/Membership Secretary

Think about the ways God has modeled generosity in our lives. He formed us in His own image. He loved us when we were sinners. He provided the payment for our sins and the gifts of adoption into His family. He supplies all our needs. The ultimate generosity is **Hebrews 12:2**, “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

As we live in relationship with God and model His character, generosity becomes part of who we are. It’s all about our attitudes and motivation in giving, presence, prayer, witness and service. We don’t have to be rich or uniquely gifted to make a difference! I know that as we experience the joy of knowing Him more intimately, and His character grows inside of us, generosity will naturally flow out.

For those of us who like to-do lists, there isn’t a one-size fits all plan for generosity. God equips each of us with different gifts and resources, and He asks each of us to be generous in different ways at different times. Doing “generosity” has us look to God for individual guidance on how He wants us to live in our personal lives, church, and the community. Learning more about God’s character through scripture and growing in our sensitivity to the Holy Spirit are critical to becoming wise and generous stewards.

How can we live up to our UMC vows beyond the words? The answer is in the knowledge and attitude of generosity.

Prayers – praying for others and their needs is an act of generosity!

Presence – being generous with our presence in worship and small groups produces fruitfulness and then grows outward to the community.

Service – Sowing abundantly and with perseverance and good attitudes.

Witness – How amazing this world would be if we could practice and tell more people about our generous God. You think the world might change even a little bit?

Gifts – Just stepping up to give, in one’s life, is huge! But to go beyond and give more extravagantly to our church, loved ones, and community, when we are able, is awesome!

I’ll end with Paul’s words from **2 Corinthians 9: 6-11**

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written:

‘He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.’

Now he who supplies seed to the Sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. **You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.”**

Family

by Shannon Stone, Bookkeeper

In June of 2016 a long-time friend came to me to ask if I could audit his church's books. I am not a CPA, and in Texas, auditors must be Certified by the state. So my answer was no, but that short conversation led me to St. John's UMC, who, coincidentally was also looking for someone to take over the bookkeeping position. Christine Studebaker had been here many years, and she was being promoted. I'm sure you all know that Christine is a godly woman, full of integrity and a deep love for her family and the congregation she serves. The shoes were difficult to fill, but I took the position. While I am a Christian, and have been in the Church since infancy, I had never worked for a church before. I did not know what to expect or how I would be accepted. My goal was to follow Paul's advice in Colossians 3:23 and work for the Lord.

In August of 2017, my mom passed away. She had been sick for a while, and we knew that neurologically she was not coming back to us. It was a long struggle for her, and when she finally went home to Jesus, we were devastated, but relieved that she could rest and sit at the feet of her Savior finally. While we know we will see her again, and spend eternity with her, it was a very difficult time for me and my family.

My own church is sprawling (mega, you might call it). We have some very dear and close friends there. Those close friends fed us and looked after us. But so did St. John's UMC. I was treated like a family member by this congregation. I can't express how much that meant to me, and how I hold that love and affection so closely in my heart, still. You all were so warm and good to us, and during that time of loss and sadness, you were there, helping us. Some of you even came to my mom's service, which was so touching. My family is still feeling that tenderness from you.

In July of 2019, our future (at the time) son-in-law medic/soldier was getting ready to deploy to Afghanistan. He and our daughter were making plans to be married before he left, and they chose St. John's UMC sanctuary to commit to their covenant with each other, in the eyes of God and some very close family. They chose to serve us communion, and the ceremony and communion service was one of the most touching and loving that I've ever witnessed. Again, St. John's UMC plays a very meaningful role in our lives. It helps that I personally have such a feeling of comfort here, and it spills over to my family.

While we plan for the next year, please know that an "outsider" sees your love for one another, and for the physical structures that house that love. When I am in the sanctuary and the Family Life Center, and the classrooms and kitchens, I feel the Lord's presence and know that you all are caring well for each other. I witness, through your giving, the ministries that God entrusts you with, and I appreciate so much the care you take of your community.

Keep your eyes on Him that holds the world in His loving hands, and He will provide everything you need. Matthew 6:33.

Visible Obedience

by Michelle Cousineau, Executive Secretary/Communications Coordinator

Have you ever wondered why God asks us to be stewards of His church? Have you ever wondered what that means? In the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, stewardship means the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care. Biblically speaking, stewardship is our prayers, presence, service, gifts, and witness. In the United Methodist Church, we specifically state this as a covenant when we welcome new members by stating, "We renew our covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, and our service, that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ." (UMC Hymnal, pg. 38). You may have noticed it does not say "or" between any of those acts. It is also not a wish list of things for us to do from God. God commands us to be obedient stewards of His church.

I bet you are wondering why I am talking about obedience in this context. To obey means "to follow the commands or guidance of" (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary). God gives us commands and guidance throughout the Old and New Testaments. In Haggai 2:4b, God commands us to "**Be strong**, all you people of the land, declares the Lord. **Work** for I am with you, declares the Lord of Hosts." God does not tell us we get to stop being stewards of His church because we retired, are tired, just don't feel like it. No matter where you are in life, God still commands you to work. So, what does this mean for you and me?

In John 14:15 Jesus tells us, "**If you love Me, you will keep My commands.**" It is in our obedience to God that we pray. It is in our obedience to God that we are present. It is in our obedience to God that we serve. It is in our obedience to God that we give our gifts. It is in our obedience to God that we witness to the Gospel. God tells us to be stewards of all these things and one does not work without the other. God is calling us to be obedient to pray, be present, serve, give, and witness to His glory. Jen Wilkin states, "Nothing bears greater witness to the truth of our invisible God than our visible obedience to His commands." It is through obedience we grow as individuals, as a church family, and most importantly, in our relationship with our Holy God.

So, my dear family, I am asking you to start your stewardship of God's church with prayer. Pray for how you will be present in the church this year. Pray for how you will serve your church and community this year. Pray for how you will share your time and gifts this year. Pray about how you will witness the gospel and to God's glory this year.

I pray for God's Holiness to touch you, so you feel His unconditional love and unlimited presence in your life. May you walk in the way of his statutes and keep them to the end. (Psalm 119:33 ESV)

The very-organized Michelle C. sent me notification that the topic for this month's newsletter is "Stewardship: Prayers, Presence, Service, Gifts, Witness". I smiled inwardly because I believed that I have these responsibilities covered. I am thinking, Prayers – I lead the Prayer Team Ministry, so – check; Presence – I am here every Sunday, so- check; Service – Prayer Team Ministry, Sunday School teacher, member of UMW, so – check; Gifts – I pledge monetarily every week, so – check; Witness – Hmmm. Uh-oh. This one might be an issue. Are the other things I am involved in with St. Johns going to get me by in this area? Could it possibly be that I am to witness in other locales, around folks who may not know me? If so, exactly how do I manage that? After a bit of mental pondering, I realized a few things. When I had lunch recently with a dear friend but not a St. Johns member, we prayed before our meal. Not showy, just holding hands and praying. Was anyone watching? I have absolutely no idea, as that is not why we prayed. Could God use it anyway? Of course – He is God. When I volunteered at the Williamson Museum recently, I worked with a museum employee who also attends Southwestern University, and with guidance from the Holy Spirit, brashly spoke up to inquire about her church affiliation. (I say "brashly" because I usually do not ask people younger than myself – okay, DECADES younger – which church they attend.) This young lady was quite open, admitting that she did not attend any specific church regularly, although she has visited some churches – but not St. Johns. Being a history buff (as noted, she works in a museum), she was fascinated by the rich history surrounding the founding of St. Johns. Hopefully she will visit, and receive a warm welcome, as I certainly did when I first visited. I have decided that I am not a total wash on my "witness" responsibility, although it could surely be improved upon. And I think it might be wise to drop the smug attitude about the other parts of Stewardship. Pretty sure all could use a little improving. With God's help, I will endeavor to do just that.



Blessings,
Martha Arizpe



ST. JOHN'S UNITED METHODIST MEN

General Meeting

Tuesday, October 12, 2021 @ 6:00 PM

Family Life Center



ST. JOHN'S UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

General Meeting

Tuesday, October 19, 2021 @ 2:00 PM

Fellowship Hall

Administrative News

Year-to-Date Financials

Aug -21	Church Activity YTD	<i>Annual Budget</i>
Income	\$315,738	\$513,046
Expenses	\$344,930	\$560,677
NET	(\$29,192)	(\$47,271)

Monthly Attendance

Sept-21	Total	<i>Monthly</i>
2020 Tot	394	99
2021 Tot	369	92

	Sunday, Oct 3 Communion Sunday	Sunday, Oct 10	Sunday, Oct 17	Sunday, Oct 24	Sunday, Oct 31 5th Sunday 10:30 AM SERVICE TIME
9:00 Traditional Service in St. John's Sanctuary					
Worship Leader	Rev. Darren Walker	Rev. Darren Walker	Rev. Darren Walker	Rev. Darren Walker	
Liturgist	Mary Lou Wells	Terry Blackburn	Gene Lawhon	Carolyn Henry	
Ushers	Terry & Patsy Blackburn	Gene & Tina Lawhon	Malcolm & Mary Lou Wells	Shirley Channell & Betty Tanner	
Communion					
11:00 Blended Service in St. John's Family Life Center					
Worship Leader	Rev. Darren Walker	Rev. Darren Walker	Rev. Darren Walker	Rev. Darren Walker	Rev. Darren Walker
Liturgist					Dayne Carlson
Ushers	Michelle & Cody Champion	Michelle & Cody Champion	Michelle & Cody Champion	Michelle & Cody Champion	Dean & Carolyn May
Communion	Michelle & Cody Champion				



first

Putting God First

Stewardship Campaign
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10 - 31, 2021



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

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