

ST. JOHN'S UMC



LOVE
GOD.
LOVE
OTHERS.

September 2021 / Issue 9

FOCUS



“PRAY CONTINUALLY”

– I Thessalonians 5:17

Focus on God

by Rev. Darren Walker

Dear Church Family,

Are you familiar with breath prayers? They are short prayers you can say in one breath. The Jesus Prayer is a famous one I have used. The words are “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” You can say it aloud or silently. You repeat it over and over, being still, focusing on God. Or you might pick a short scripture to use, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” Philippians 4:13. A very popular breath prayer is “O, God! O, God! O, God!” when people are very scared or overwhelmed.

Why use this form of praying? I have found this is a very helpful way to calm my mind and redirect my thoughts. It is a way to focus on God and work towards being calm and still in His Presence. Whenever you have a repetitive thing to do like washing dishes or raking leaves, knitting, or sanding, or get caught in a negative thought loop, praying a breath prayer is a good way to turn your attention to God. So, slow your breathing. Breathe out your prayer. Pause. Breathe in your prayer. Pause. And repeat. Spend some time focusing on God.

Grace and Peace,

Darren Walker



September 2021 Events

- **Monday, September 6: Church Office Closed**
- **Wednesday, September 8: CPR & First Aid Class**
- **Friday, September 10: MOPS Meeting in Fellowship Hall**
- **Tuesday, September 14: UMM Meeting in Fellowship Hall**
- **Thursday, September 16: Church-Wide Bible Study in Family Life Center**
- **Saturday, September 18: Youth-Lock-In**
- **Sunday, September 19: Church-Wide Bible Study in Family Life Center**
- **Monday, September 20: Lifeline Screening in Family Life Center**
- **Tuesday, September 21: UMW Circle Meeting in Fellowship Hall**
- **Sunday, September 26: UMW Sunday**
- **Monday, September 27: Single Board Meeting 6:00 PM in Sanctuary**

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

Lord's Prayer for Preschoolers, and You

by JoAnne Gaytan, Children's Coordinator

Want an easy way to renew your focus on praising God? Keep it basic and go back and think about some of your favorite Bible passages, prayers and songs and try to remember (or discover) what it's meaning is. It's so easy to repeat the Lord's Prayer or the 23rd Psalm, or sing *Amazing Grace* or *He Lives* by memory and forget to think about what we are singing, promising, or proclaiming.

When I taught preschool, I taught them the Lord's Prayer. I always made sure we discussed what it meant as they learned it so they would understand what they were praying. Since I don't teach a preschool class anymore, sometimes I like to go back and refresh my understanding of the prayer that Jesus taught us.

Here is my preschool explanation of The Lord's Prayer:

The Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:9-13

⁹ After this manner therefore pray ye:

Our Father who art in heaven,

We are praying to God. He is our loving father in Heaven.

Hallowed be thy name.

"Hallowed" means holy or great. It's like saying "God, Your name is awesome!"

¹⁰ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

God's kingdom is on earth and in heaven, and we should live in peace and love each other and treat each other nicely so that earth can be like heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread.

We can trust God to give us what we need every day.

¹² And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

God, forgive us for our mistakes, and we promise to forgive others who have done wrong to us.

¹³ Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,

God, help us do the right thing, even when it's really hard.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

God is wonderful and powerful, and will be forever and always.

Amen means, "so be it," or "this is the truth, and I agree."



Answered Prayers?

by Kathryn Price, Director of Family Ministry

"It's a miracle!" "God answers prayer!" These joyful exclamations are heard when someone has prayed ardently for something to happen – and it happened. But what if you prayed just as hard and for a long time for something to happen, and it doesn't? Did God answer your prayer?

Yes, He did, but the answer might have been No. Or the answer wasn't what you thought it would be, or what you wanted it to be. We keep forgetting that we are not in charge here, that God's plan for us might not mean getting everything we pray for, but to make us stronger in our faith, and to accept what we get with thankfulness.

Even when God says No to our prayers, He will give you something else for which you can be thankful and strength to know what that is – if you keep praying.

What Is Prayer?

by Carolyn Henry, Congregational Care Coordinator

What is prayer? I think of it as talking directly to God. And like the old familiar song says, “What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer”. It’s amazing when you stop to think about it. We can communicate directly with the God who created the universe and all living things. We don’t need a mediator or go – between. We can just open our mouths (and sometimes just our hearts) and speak directly to Him.

Over the many years that I have been a Christian, I have talked to God many, many times. And so many times, I’ve been disappointed. I’ve prayed for healing for people to be cured, and they have died. I’ve prayed for an aversion to some disaster, and it happened anyway. And here are some of the things I’ve said to God. “Are you listening?” “Why won’t you answer me?” “Please help me!” “Don’t you care?” “How long do I have to wait for an answer”? Because sometimes I feel like all my prayers are futile. I feel that God is not listening at all.

Praying is not a magic formula for getting everything you want – whether it’s healing for another, or for yourself. But God is definitely listening. Whenever you pray – you enter into closeness with God that cannot even be described. But you can feel it.

Some years ago, we had a “ministry fair” and each ministry group made posters to display in the fellowship hall. I’ll never forget the one that Martha Arizpe put together for the prayer team. It contains a picture that I can’t forget. It shows a figure totally alone with bowed head. The caption reads “What prayer feels like”. The next picture is of the same person in the same position, but this time Jesus’ is there with His arms around the person. The caption reads “What prayer really is”.

And that is all I need to know. When I pray, Jesus is right there with me. When I can’t even find the words, Jesus supplies them for me. He comforts me

and is very close to me all during this time. And not just me. The same thing happens with the person I’m praying for. God is there with them also, giving them healing, strength, comfort, joy, hope and peace.

Yes ... “what an amazing privilege “prayer is.



**STEPHEN
MINISTRY**

A Great Way You Can Help a Hurting Friend

by Stephen Ministers

Do you have a friend, neighbor, coworker, or relative who has suffered a loss or is going through a difficult time? Here’s a great way you can help them—tell them about our Stephen Ministry! Stephen Ministers are members of our congregation who have received special training to provide high-quality, confidential, one-to-one, Christian care to hurting people. Stephen Ministers meet weekly with their care receivers to listen, care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support. (Males are matched with males, and females are matched with females.) The caring relationship lasts for as long as the person needs care. It’s a powerful way you can help a hurting friend.

To learn how to connect someone you know with a Stephen Minister, talk to the church office or reach out to one of the Stephen Leaders: Judy Conner, Carrie Godward, or Dayne Carlson. Our Stephen Ministers are there to care!

Why Prayer Matters

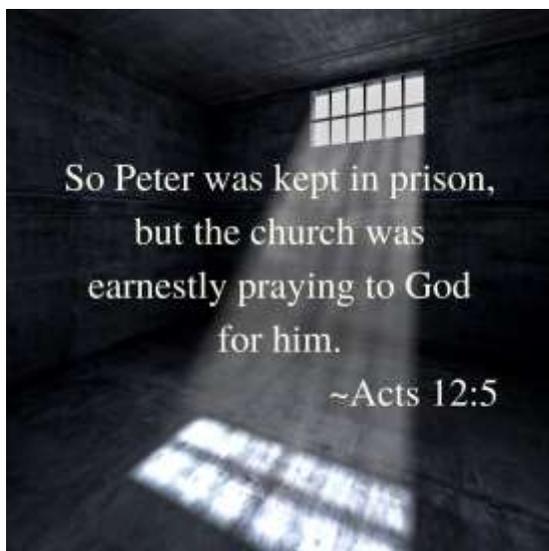
by Michelle Cousineau, Executive Secretary/Communications Coordinator

Prayer is one of the disciplines I have always had trouble with throughout my life. Growing up French Roman Catholic, I was always told that God only answered the prayers said by the priests and the nuns. Imagine, being a child going through Sunday school every week and being told God won't listen to you because you are not the priest or the nun. Needless to say, my relationship with Jesus suffered, my understanding of how prayer works and what the Word of God said about prayer suffered. I am learning and thankful to God that he does listen to our prayers, too.

Acts 12:5 says, "So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him." This is so powerful to me because in their praying there is a faith that God hears and God answers, just as He answered the church praying for Peter. I can only equate this to the time we moved from Rhode Island to Texas. I have told you the story before from different angles. As we were moving, I had prayed that God would allow us to stay in Rhode Island. I was terrified to move to Texas. After all, Rhode Island was all I had known. My Bristol church family prayed for us from the time they knew we were leaving to the time we arrived in Texas and beyond. They prayed for God's Will in my life. They prayed for God to meet us in Texas and show us his faithfulness. They prayed. It was not an easy time for any of us. We were in a completely different culture, and I know I did not feel God answered my prayers. How wrong I was. He answered. He just did not answer the way I wanted Him to answer.

I thank God every day that He knew what we needed better than we did. I am sure Peter thanked God for answering the prayers of His church family the way He did for him. Prayer matters because God's Will in our life matters. There is a devotional I recently read that talked about "praying through." It ended by saying, "We can never know how God will answer the prayers of His people. We only know that He tells us to pray about anything and everything. We may feel powerless in ourselves, but when we lift our prayers to God, when we 'pray through' our difficulties, the door is opened for God to step in and do the miraculous."

My prayer for all of you is for God's Will to be done in your lives, no matter how he answers those prayers. All that matters is we pray through it.



When I was a child, my family attended St. Mark's Episcopal Church routinely. I also went to Catholic Mass each school day, as a regular part of the program at St. Luke's in Irving. As a result, I thought a lot about God. It occurred to me that if I did not pray often enough, then God would not know who I was, and I would have to introduce myself to Him should I happen to make it into heaven. I decided that situation would be unbearably embarrassing, so I made a conscientious effort to pray often. Fortunately, along with adulthood came clarity, and I realized that God had always known who I was, and the point of prayer was for me to learn who He was. I am no mystery to The Creator – He has known me from my very beginning. Through prayer, which is just talking to God, I have learned who He is. I have felt His presence in the most profound way, and I know as clearly as I know anything that He loves me. I have cried out to Him when my child became ill, and I have repeatedly recognized His complete Kingship over the world. I “gave” my sick child into His care, which is the best way I know of to be able to sleep at night. My children are, first and foremost, children of God, and I was acknowledging that fact. My prayers continue, and I feel that when God and I at last meet, I will know who He is, because we have corresponded regularly. I pray the same is true for you.



Blessings,
Martha Arizpe



ST. JOHN'S UNITED METHODIST MEN

General Meeting

Tuesday, September 14, 2021 @ 6:00 PM

Family Life Center



ST. JOHN'S UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Berquist/Carlson Circle Group

Tuesday, September 21, 2021 @ 2:00 PM

Fellowship Hall

Time to Harvest

Harvest Fest
Offering Call



September 19-
October 3, 2021



Adult, Child & Infant CPR/AED & First Aid

Certification & Renewal Class

Wednesday, September 8, 2021
6:30 - 9:00 pm
Course fee: \$30

**Training by CPR Resources
All Instructors are
Professional Firefighters**

Contact Christine at (512) 863-5886 if you are interested

Monthly Attendance

Aug-21	Total	<i>Monthly</i>
2020 Tot	492	98
2021 Tot	463	93

Year-to-Date Financials

Jul-21	Church Activity YTD	<i>Annual Budget</i>
Income	\$286,712	\$513,406
Expenses	\$302,295	\$560,677
NET	(\$15,583)	(\$47,271)

	Sunday, Sep. 5 Communion Sunday	Sunday, Sep 12	Sunday, Sep 19	Sunday, Sep 26 UMW Sunday	
9:00 Traditional Service in St. John's Sanctuary					
Worship Leader	Rev. Darren Walker	Rev. Darren Walker	Rev. Darren Walker	Rev. Darren Walker	
Liturgist	John Aleman	Carolyn Henry	Dayne Carlson	Virginia Davis	
Ushers	Charley & Rita Cherry	Chip & LouAnne Case	Ken & Rhonda Kondo	Shirley Channell & Betty Tanner	
Communion	Clark & Nancy Bottlinger				
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	
Liturgist					
Ushers	Bill & Annette Holland	Bill & Annette Holland	Bill & Annette Holland	Christine Studebaker	
Communion	Bill & Annette Holland				

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

