



A Community of Faith With a Place for You!
A place to belong... A place to believe... A place to become!

STEEPLE NOTES

MAY 2020

Meet CHARLIE BONES---

Thanks to church member Cathi Garza for introducing Charlie Bones to her Facebook followers and church friends after her family's recent visit to the beach. Charlie, of course, is sporting his face mask and his ever-handy sanitizer wipes.



A Salute to Our Graduating Seniors

Student Ministries Director Leslie Albrecht wants to recognize Class of 2000 graduating seniors who are part of the St. John's UMC family of faith.

The coronavirus pandemic and COVID 19 safeguards have impacted these seniors' final year, much to their and their families' dismay.

"We are planning more ways to honor their hard work but please remember these seniors in your prayers as they finish their senior year virtually," Leslie said. "We look forward to the time when we can gather safely as a congregation to celebrate with them as we send them off on their next adventure."



JACKSON CLAUNCH, Moody High School. LUKE FOMENKO, Flour Bluff HS; TORI GARCIA, Collegiate HS; JACOB PEREZ, King HS; and HAYDEN CALHOUN, Smithson Valley HS.

Each of these students have been an integral part of our youth group at various times over the years.

If you know of a 2020 graduating senior who is part of the St. John's community and should be honored, please contact either Leslie Albrecht at leslie.sjmethodist@gmail.com or Cathy McRorey at catherine.sjmethodist@gmail.com

Looking Forward To Resuming Worship Services



Pastor Wade and several members of the laity will meet this coming week (via virtual Zoom) to discuss and look forward to resuming worship services at St. John's at some time in the future. In the meantime, everyone can tune in to the recorded worship service this Sunday, May 3, at 11 a.m.

This week's sermon is titled "All Together" and is based on Acts 2:42-47. Be sure to tune in or watch at your convenience. Special thanks to Pastor Wade and a great team who have produced worship services since mid-March.

Future sermons include "Mars Hill Thrill," "Stephen Ministry," "Ascension Attention," and "Lost in Pentecost," all with scriptures from the Book of Acts.

May 31 is Pentecost Sunday, which celebrates the Holy Spirit touching the disciples who were all gathered together 50 days after Christ's Resurrection. If we can all worship together in person on May 31 (or even if we can't), we can "Wear Red" to symbolize the presence of the Holy Spirit.

CHURCH MEMBERS AND VISITORS:

During the continuing COVID 19 social distancing and staying safe, you are invited to check your email frequently during the week to read all electronically transmitted church-related announcements and updates. If your email is not on file or if you have changed your email address, let the church staff know immediately.

Please maintain your financial support of the church, if possible. Offerings and pledges can be mailed to the church at 5300 S. Alameda, Corpus Christi, TX 78412, and will be processed weekly by the church bookkeeper. Thank you for your faithfulness and your continued support.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

We Are Connected to Each Other and the World

This has been an unusual year and it's only May!

I was talking to a friend who is in his 90s who said he has never seen anything like this in his entire lifetime. While I join in our collective lament for the way things should be, I still have a heart full of hope. Our world is united in the struggle against a common enemy, our society values those who are in danger, and our churches have found new ways to share the Good News of Jesus Christ to a world in need.

Personally, I have had better conversations about what worship means and why community matters than any other time in my career in ministry. I have witnessed more creative ministry in the past few weeks than I have been a part of in years.

This virus is terrifying and awful, but God's love and power cannot and will not be stopped, and that is a great sign of resurrection worth celebrating, especially during this Easter season.

We face the daunting task of looking beyond the sadness of our church building being closed temporarily, undoubtedly a unique event in the long life of St. John's UMC. Despite the separation and fear, we have to follow the example of the early church who answered the call to be Easter people despite the world being set against them.

Even though we have to maintain a social distance from our neighbors, we also have to find a way to share the hope of the empty tomb with those who live in fear.

We have done our best to honor recent occasions under the circumstances. We celebrated online services for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, and two Easter services.

I hope you will continue to make time to be together online for worship each Sunday at 11 a.m. I urge you to envision the faces of the people you normally see on Sunday and other days in the church and then pick up the phone and call or check in with them.

We are connected by our shared ministry together, and we need to find ways to stay connected as we currently exist outside the walls of our buildings. In this Easter season, we are connected to each other and to the world by the shared hope of the resurrection story. It is vital that we stay connected to our friends by intentional acts of love and care.

If you know of anyone who is in need of help in any way, or prayer, or just a call, please offer that to them and/or let me know and we will see that it gets done.

I hope to see you all very soon, but until then, know you are in my prayers.

--Pastor Wade Lindstrom



MEET MIKE MATA

11:17 Praise Team Leader and Musician

Hello, my name is Michael Steven Mata. I'm from right here, Corpus Christ Texas. I am currently single and have three children, my oldest Luke Christian Mata, followed by Andrea Noelle Mata and my youngest, Alexis Jade Mata. I have been serving our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the music ministry since I was 18 years old.

I work at Butler Rental and Sales as Sales and Marketing Manager. In previous years I was an Insurance Agent for Farmers Insurance and worked for the Corpus Christi Police Department when I was younger.

I have been serving as Praise Team leader at St. John's UMC for the past 10 months for the 11:15 contemporary service. I would like to thank Pastor Wade (and Pastor KP) for allowing me the opportunity to express my gifts and talents at St John's . I'm excited about the endless possibilities our Lord has for us and seek His direction in bringing a wonderful worship experience to our contemporary service. I covet your prayers and ask for your support in serving at St. John's.

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

By Church Staff

Thank you so much for your support, past and present, of St. John's Food Pantry! We have served hundreds of individuals in recent months.

We are sad that we have been unable to distribute food during the past few weeks because of COVID 19. We hope to resume our twice-weekly distribution soon, but until then...

If you, your family, neighbors, or other folks or families you know need food, please know that nonperishable food items are available through the Pantry and we want to share them.

You can contact Pastor Wade at wade.sjmethodist@gmail.com or by calling or leaving a text at 960-4021 or you can email Cathi McRorey at catherine.sjmethodist@gmail.com.

We will be happy to get you food from your St. John's Food Pantry.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 David Ocker
- 4 Robin Swope
- 6 Cindy Haaker
- 7 Margie Staiger
- 8 Steven Keener, Parker Nisbet
- 9 Carla Martin, Dana Pallotti
- 10 Timothy Darst, Isaac Elliott
- 12 Scott Patton
- 13 Phyllis Jones, Terri Lindstrom, Sarah Smith
- 15 DJ Adams
- 16 Benny Cason
- 17 Daryl Roberts, David Sky-Eagle, Christian Plumber
- 18 Hayden Calhoun, Lee Wehring
- 22 Mitchell Cobb
- 23 Michael Shaffer
- 24 Rawley Martin, Ashley Pattillo, Sydney Pattillo
- 26 Lori Schwartz Ware
- 27 Martha Bell

NOTE: If your birthday is not listed, is included incorrectly, or if there is some other error, please call the church at 991-4342.

Unexpected Blessings Unexpected Blessings Unexpected Bless Unexpected Blessings...

You may have received an unexpected blessing recently. A federal stimulus check may have showed up in your bank account today.

Millions of Americans are going to receive one as part of the CARES Act. Most of you will be grateful for it, but the truth is, some of us have kept our jobs or source of income during this economic crisis.

Some individuals have decided to donate their stimulus check to help others who really need it, and we invite you to do likewise. Of course, if you're one of the many Americans who are depending on that check just to get by, then we thank God the money is there for you. But, if you are going to be fine without it, then we encourage you to use your unexpected blessing to bless others.

You may want to consider making a donation to St. Johns United Methodist Church missions (outreach) to help support others during this difficult time. Many of our missions support those that need help supporting their families at this time.

Could you give some or all of your stimulus check to St. Johns United Methodist Church missions? Could you share this blessing with others?

If you feel compelled to do so, please make a gift to St. John's UMC, 5300 S. Alameda St., Corpus Christi, TX 78412

Thank you, Darron Bergstrom, Finance Chair

Unexpected Blessings Unexpected Blessings Unexpected Bless

CHURCH CHATTER ...

- An announcement is expected by May 8 from the Rio Texas Conference regarding whether the 2020 Annual Conference will be held in June or whether it will be rescheduled. As you know, the Annual Conference draws more than 1,200 delegates (both pastors and members of the laity) from the churches represented in the Rio Texas Conference. Be watching for details.
- The Coastal Bend Emmaus Community, in recent correspondence and Facebook posts, has notified Emmaus members and leaders that "we will gather again in the future when safety and health can be assured." The 2020 Men's and Women's Walks to Emmaus have been cancelled and will be rescheduled in 2021, depending on availability of the retreat center and other factors.

Reminder

Members and visitors of St. John's community of faith are reminded to check their emails frequently during the week to capture all "breaking news" regarding when worship services, meetings, ministries, etc. will resume. Questions at this time can always be directed to Pastor Wade Lindstrom, either by leaving a message on the church answering machine (991-4342) or contacting him directly.

Meet the 2020 Confirmation Class

By Leslie Albrecht
Director of Student Ministries

We would like to introduce the members of Confirmation con Queso, the 2020 class of St. John's Confirmands.

These students have spent many Sunday afternoons playing games, reading the Bible, and discussing just what it means to become a full and professing member of the United Methodist Church and specifically how that relates to their membership at St. John's.

The class of 13 confirmands includes 7th graders through high school seniors.

Unfortunately, the stay-at-home orders have meant that we were unable to attend some of the field trips which were planned.

Pastor Wade is working on an updated plan for finishing up the confirmation process, and we look forward to a time when we can safely meet together again to celebrate this milestone in the lives of these students.

CONGRATULATIONS to:

Cameron Ainsworth, Grace Bergstrom, Palmer Blue, Karley Boswell, Kharis Boswell, Jackson Claunch, Levi Delk, Odin Elliott, Evan Hudson, Malia Shomaker, Devon Stockton, Landon Stockton, Aidan Waldrop, and Christian Waldrop.

"We also look forward to offering the sacrament of Baptism to Jackson and Evan," Leslie said.

(Please see related story at right about the 2020 Confirmation Class mentors.



IN MEMORIAM: Jerry Swift

October 15, 1928 – April 15, 2020

Gerald "Jerry" Glenn Swift, beloved and devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and friend passed away on April 15, 2020, in San Antonio at the age of 91. Jerry and his late wife, Gail Hance Swift (who passed away in October 2016) were part of the founding membership when St. John's UMC was launched in 1955.

Jerry was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He was a 1946 graduate of Okmulgee (OK) High School and joined the US Marine Corps, serving until 1948. He married Gail in 1950. Jerry graduated from the University of Tulsa in May 1952 with a Bachelor of Science degree, and he worked as an oil and gas geologist for 50 years. Starting as a field geologist, he moved through various positions including retiring as a vice president for Sabine Oil & Gas. One of his accomplishments was developing a process for leaching uranium rather than mining.

During his working years, he guided his family through 26 moves, always providing a sense of wonder and opportunity at each step. He taught an appreciation of nature to his children including how to camp, fish, hunt, and find fossils and rocks. He faithfully served the Methodist church, leading church committees, leading and participating in outreach and mission activities, serving as lay leader, singing in the choir, and teaching Sunday school.

Jerry is survived by his children, Sharon, Sheila, Steven, and Spencer; nine grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. He is also survived by countless other family and friends who will deeply miss his presence in their lives.

The Swift family plans to hold a memorial service at Bulverde UMC in San Antonio at a future date to be announced. Memorial gifts can be made to St. John's UMC or to one of Jerry's favorite charities: Alzheimer's Disease Research in Clarksburg, MD; or Timon's Ministries or Good Samaritan Rescue Mission in Corpus Christi.

St. John's United Methodist Men



St. John's United Methodist Men look forward to the time when the weekly Wednesday morning Breakfast and Fellowship can resume.

2020 Officers:

Jim Falwell, President
Jack Pace, Vice President
Darron Bergstrom, Treasurer
Gary Schwartz, Secretary



OUTREACH CONTINUES!

(This story, featured March 26 in a TAMU-CC publication, was referenced by Cathi Garza to share a special Outreach activity involving church member Julie Fomenko.)

Nursing Faculty Sews, Donates Face Masks to Local Health Professionals

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – Inspired by her former students and current colleagues, Dr. Julie Fomenko, Assistant Professor and Director of the Simulation and Clinical Learning Center at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, is doing her part to in the fight against COVID-19.

“I have a colleague who is a nurse practitioner in a local urgent care clinic who recently asked me for supplies as they were nearly out and unable to get more,” said Fomenko. “I got her some masks and some basic personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies to help tide her over. But seeing the vast shortages of PPE for all our frontline nurses got me thinking... I could make them!”

Dusting off her sewing machine, Fomenko polished up on a skill she hadn’t used in more than two decades, and so far, has crafted more than three dozen medical face masks to donate to any medical professional in need.

She’s doing her work in the evenings, after a full day of virtual nursing simulation labs with Islander students.

NOTE: Julie and two other St. John’s members, Robyn Cobb and Karen Carden, have teamed up to sew masks in the past several weeks to donate to various places. Julie said they have made over 600.

THANK YOU, JULIE, and all those involved in providing goods and services during this time of COVID-19

BLOOD BANK DONATIONS RECEIVED--The Coastal Bend Community Blood Bank received donations last Sunday, April 26, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in St. John’s UMC front parking lot. Thanks to all church members and also members of the community who responded. If you are a regular blood donor but were unable to participate last week, please remember that the local Blood Bank needs donations and encourages you to check its website to see where blood draws are scheduled.

MEMORIAL GIFTS RECEIVED

Financial gifts given in memory, in celebration of, or in honor of family members, friends, and ministries are placed in St. John’s UMC Memorial Fund. Current funds include Building, Choir, Youth, Scholarship, Worship, Care/Concern/Bereavement, Food Pantry, and Undesignated for general church needs. Your gift, in any amount, is sincerely appreciated. Be sure to designate which fund should receive your gift. Gifts to the Memorial Fund also may be given anonymously.

In loving memory of Jim Heslep, husband of Kathryn Heslep, an undesignated gift from Mildred & Thomas Heslep of Dallas.

In loving memory of Jo Anne Wilshusen, mother of Scott Wilshusen of Glen Rose and Greg Wilshusen of Corpus Christi, undesignated memorial gifts from Mrs. Mary Jane Fox, Chris Davis Garcia, and Joyce T. Zimmerman.

In loving memory of Jerry Swift, one of St. John’s founding members, an undesignated gift from Mrs. Mary Jane Fox.

In loving memory of John Zimmerman, husband of Joyce Zimmerman, an undesignated gift from the Friendship Sunday School Class.

BE A BLESSING TO SOMEONE ELSE

Throughout the pandemic and COVID-19 health crisis, Pastor Wade and others in the community have reminded us how important it is to reach out to church members and friends we haven’t seen or talked to in recent weeks and let them know they are loved and missed. Those telephone calls and emails are important....and will be a blessing to you as well as those who hear your voice and receive your message. Several church members also are providing meals for others, and that’s another way to show people we care.

St. John's UMC Prayer List



Hospital/Rehab: Charlene Hardy, Tom Niskala

Grieving: Family of Jerry Swift; Family of Dennis Brewer (friend of Judi and John Edwards); Family of Janie Rose Ramirez Alejandro on death of her mother;

*Please pray for those who are on the Prayer List. After 30 days, names on the prayer list will be removed. Please submit another prayer card or call the church office at 991-4342 if you would to add someone or return someone to the prayer list.
[Emergency messages to Pastor Wade--960-4021]*

Our Church	Andi Chamberlain			
Coronavirus Victims and Families	Margo Chapman			
All Medical Personnel & First Responders	Betty Collins			
President Trump	Josh W. Cox			
US Military	Dana D'Amore	Hydie Johnson	Judi Oestreich	Fay Sassman
World Leadership	Mike Dailey	Jack Johnson	Roma Onwiler	Ivan & Lyneve Shaver
CC Metro Ministries	K. Davidson	Stacia Johnston	Chris Oxley	Susan Skidmore
Phillip Balderas	Patricia Davis	Phyllis Jones	Mike P.	Richard & Angela Strong
Joe Barrera	Charlie Fuller	Ann Jordan	Dolores Pace	Sarah L. Taber
Alicia Bargas	Nicki Fischer	Linda Jordan	Jack Pace	Charles Teas
Buff Betz	Judy Forbes	Marta Juarez	Lisa Pantoja	Terry & Marie
Robin Blue	Elizabeth Gallaway	Margaret K.	Kelly R.	Dorothy Tullos
Melissa Brownlee	Robert Garza	Dr. Daksha Kalies	Dottie Ramella	Noe Vela, Jr.
Tyler Brownlee	Brenda Glover	Mimi Keen	Jennifer Ridgeway	Noe & Melida Vela, Sr.
Margo C.	Pam Glover	Jim & Jill Kelly	Sherry Rizzo & Family	Marla Warfield
Jeff Caravantes	Fay Haggerty	Charlotte Kunc	Richard Rodela	Davris White
Marcia Caravantes	Jimbo	Randy L.	Lupe Rodriguez	Betty Wilson
Samuel & Annette Carter	Kathryn Heslep	Tommy Lewis	Rilla Roots	Beverly Wilson
	Elle Silvas Holloway	Leann Love & Family	Kelly S.	Mary Lee Woodson
	Hopkins Family	Claudia Liscano	Linda S.	Roseann Zammiello
	Hudson	Elena Martinez		



A Special Prayer from United Methodist Women...

From Carole Salsberry, St. John's UMW President:

In the last few weeks, the Thursday intercessory reading has seemed quite relevant for this time of COVID 19 and the coronavirus pandemic that we are going through. I wanted to share it with church members:

**For all who suffer from disease, oppression, injustice and evil;
the sick, the dying, the homeless, the unemployed, the orphaned,
the widowed, the lonely, and those who care for them.**

May you, O Christ, knowing suffering and bearing the burdens of this world, be present in the suffering of these sisters and brothers in this community and in every community; that they may know the light of your presence and that the flame of hope may be rekindled and sustained within them.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.



Reflections from Fellow Church Members on God's abundant love, the coronavirus, shelter in place, social distancing, missing church, and more.

From Rick Darst

Our Lay Leader Chris Garcia asked for a short piece on perspective addressing the impact on my life, how social distancing and shelter in place have impacted my bubble, and my personal words of faith and hope. I've had easier assignments when required to write a term thesis in school.

It is easy to focus on my personal bubble containing myself, my wife, my son Nathan and my son Timothy. My daughter, Bonnie is excluded from the bubble. She lives in San Antonio. Many friends and acquaintances are excluded from my bubble. So many lives around me that I have taken for granted I can no longer take for granted. We are in a serious situation. A difficult scarier focus is looking at the big picture. On the surface we may believe this is a unique experience we are traveling through without guidance and without a god.

One hundred-two years ago, the Spanish flu was beginning to spread across our globe and reached the United States. Across the world, millions died and here about 675,000 perished in short yet very painful and frightening experiences. Quarantine and social distancing policies were implemented and yet almost immediately anti-policy organizations evolved. There was even an anti-masking league formed.

Each of us have choices. We can give in to our fears. We can give into our loneliness. We can give in to our boredoms. We can forget who we are and where we come from. We can forget the God who created us. We can listen to uneducated hunches. We can listen to scientific knowledgeable recommendations based on factual history. We can follow logical guidance from our governments. We can render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's. We can create anarchy by not trusting authority and doing what we please. We can forget the comfort our God can give us through His grace.

There are so many choices but for me I cannot and will not forget God's abundant loving grace flowing from Heaven through my soul. I will try to pass this love to those in my bubble and those outside. We can choose to run blindly over the cliff of self extinction or we can choose to reach out for His hand.

May God's love wrap around you today and in your future.

Favorite Scripture

From Judi Oestreich

Psalm 121: 1-2

**I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.**

From Marianne Robert:

When I begin to feel like I need to hurry up and get something specific done, I start relaxing about having "all the time in the world" to take care of things.... resting in the comfort that I can slow down and "be still and know...." It's quite comforting that I like living and being alone with my dog and kitty...but I am going to be happy to be around friends soon, since I'm a bit of an extrovert!

From Hollie Boehmer

As annoying as these restrictions can be, I am more concerned with passing a potentially deadly virus to someone who couldn't survive it. Thankfully we live in a time where we can keep in touch, with friends and loved ones, through email, text, video, social media, and online church, and this makes it bearable. I am very saddened that we have lost Rabbi Kenneth Roseman (Rabbi emeritus of Congregation Beth Israel), and ask that we keep his family in our prayers.

From Chris Garcia

The past seven weeks have been surreal, with challenges none of us were expecting...staying at home, curbing our social contacts, not attending worship, wearing a mask, being mesmerized by news reports and daily updates, sharpening our teaching skills in a homebound setting, facing shortages during our infrequent shopping trips (will we ever understand the shortage of toilet paper??), learning about Zoom.

All of this hit us head-on, especially as we grasped the magnitude of a pandemic and realized our whole planet faced it together. I've never felt so alone and yet so much a part of the global community as I have since that first week in March.

It will take many months to process what we faced--I keep thinking about Psalm 23's verse, "as we walk through the valley of death, I shall fear no evil." Let's all stay safe and keep observing recommended guidelines by local, state, and federal officials.

News from the Seekers Class

The Seekers Class has been utilizing Zoom meetings (see photo at right) during the Stay at Home/COVID 19 Quarantine as a means of staying in touch.

"We had our third Zoom meeting on April 26," said Cathi Garza. "We certainly miss seeing each other in person but this communication has helped."

Cathi also noted that several friends and former class members also have participated in the meetings, including Wilson and Sheryl Calhoun, Beth and KP Polk, Bill and Meg Smith, and Karen Morris.



Seekers Class----Here's a screenshot taken by class member Cathi Garza during the class' April 26 Zoom electronic meeting. Pictured in their respective homes or other settings are Gerri & Benny Cason, Cathi Garza, Wade Lindstrom, Janice Cagle, Shelley & Vic Veit, Danna Sharpe, Robert Garza, Meg & Bill Smith, Ty& Robyn Cobb, Mike & Candi Jinnette, and Julie Fomenko.



HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY --- Sunday, May 10, 2020

Happy Mother's Day greetings to all mothers and all women everywhere who nurtured and played important roles in the lives of children in their extended families and circles of influence. Take a few minutes on May 10 and reflect on how all these mother figures influenced and impacted your life.

St. John's United Methodist Church

5300 S. Alameda, Corpus Christi, TX 78412

Rev. Wade Lindstrom, Senior Pastor

(wade.sjmethodist@gmail.com; 361-960-4021)

Leslie Albrecht, Director of Student Ministries

Barbara Benton, Bookkeeper

Kim Bryce, Traditional Music Director

Marcia Caravantes, Organist

Brian Claunch, Sunday/Weekend Custodian

Adela Garcia, Children's Learning Center Director

Cathy McRorey, Administrative Assistant

Hanna Patton-Elliott, Children's Director

Sharon Staiger, Nursery Director

OFFICE HOURS: The church office remains closed, with staff working at home, during the COVID-19 health crisis. Pastor Wade can be reached at the phone number listed above.

FOOD PANTRY (Cancelled until further notice because of COVID 19 health crisis. Reopening will be announced through church Constant Contact and Facebook.)

CHILDREN'S LEARNING CENTER: 361-991-4780

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

Location: 5300 S. Alameda, Corpus Christi, TX 78412
Church Telephone: 361-991-4342; FAX: 361-991-1840
E-mail Address: st.johnsumccc@gmail.com
Website: www.sjmethodist.com

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Suspended until further notice because of COVID-19.

INFORMATION ABOUT STEEPLE NOTES

Steeple Notes, a monthly publication of St. John's United Methodist Church, is emailed to members and guests as a PDF document and is published on the church website. Printed copies are also available at the church. Deadline for the JUNE 2020 issue is Friday, May 29, 2020.

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