



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

# STEEPLE NOTES

DECEMBER 2021

## Communion This Sunday at Both Worship Services

### Theme for Second Sunday in Advent is "Peace"

The Advent season (the four weeks leading up to Christmas Eve) provide Christians around the world an opportunity to prepare their hearts for the arrival of Baby Jesus as the Messiah. St. John's UMC worship teams invite you and your family and friends to share this time of Advent by attending Sunday worship and Christmas Eve services.

This Sunday is the second Sunday in Advent, with the theme of "Peace" captured in both the sermon and scriptures. Pastor Wade's sermon is titled "A Place at the Table."

The upcoming themes of "Joy" (December 12) and "Love" (December 19) will conclude the Advent services. (See sermon titles and scriptures on Page 2.)

Holy Communion also will be served this Sunday at both the Traditional (9 a.m.) and Contemporary (11:17 a.m.) services in the Sanctuary and the Community Life Building, respectively. All are welcomed at the Lord's table, which will be celebrated at the altar rail with juice and bread. Pre-packaged Communion elements also will be available.

#### SPECIAL REQUEST FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

(See schedule at top right): Two or three Greeters and Ushers are needed for all three Christmas Eve services to hand out worship bulletins, help with offering collection, and assist with directing Communion participation. If you are available and know which service you plan to attend, please call or text Lay Leader Chris Garcia at 361-244-4193.

### Christmas Eve Worship Services

- 4:30 p.m., Sanctuary, Candlelight & Communion
- 6:00 p.m., Community Life Building, Family Candlelight & Communion
- 9:30 p.m., Sanctuary, Lessons & Carols, Candlelight & Communion



Danna Sharpe helps hang wreath and Advent lanterns in the Community Life Building worship area.



## United Methodist Men Sets Wednesday, December 8, Evening Meeting in Fellowship Hall

Members and friends of St. John's United Methodist Men unit will meet in the fellowship hall on Wednesday evening, December 8, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. The purpose is to enjoy fellowship and to plan for 2022. President Robert Garza will preside, assisted by Bryan Thompson. The agenda will introduce the officers for 2022, approve a budget, and discuss activities for the coming year. If you are interested in participating in this event, please RSVP to Robert Garza at [trebor18@att.net](mailto:trebor18@att.net) or call or text him at 361-944-2125. All are cordially invited to attend. (See related story on United Methodist Men on Page 14.)

# A Message from Our Pastor

## Christmas Miracle Offering

We are busy planning and looking forward to a pretty full slate of events for the Advent season and Christmas Eve. Our schedule appears in this Steeplenotes edition and is available on our website and on our Facebook page.

It is traditional each Christmas to offer special gifts for specific areas of ministry. The idea grows out of the sensibility that Christmas is Jesus' birthday and so our response to that reality would include a Churchwide Christmas Miracle Offering given toward the work of Christ in the world. For this year we are committing to a special offering toward our participation in apportioned giving to the United Methodist Church.

Apportioned giving is a term which describes how the money we give to our church each week is divided and distributed throughout the United Methodist Church.

Through your support, we are able to participate in the ministry and mission of the United Methodist Church both locally and around the world. Our congregation's apportionments help pay the cost for our United Methodist colleges and universities, with the hope that our students will become faithful pastors and leaders within our churches.

St. John's within the last 3 years has also been a recipient of a number of grants provided through apportionments within the Rio Texas Conference. Those grants have, over the those three years, provided staff support for and education support for church leadership

Over the last four years, this has been a particular challenge at St. John's UMC. Financial realities over the last several years have caused us to fall short of our designated apportioned giving. One of the unique and defining factors of the United Methodist Church is that we are connectional.

One way we participate in this connection is through our apportionments.

Our apportionments also help to provide care and support for children with AIDS, and to speak out against violence in the Middle East that is creating a new generation of orphans. Our apportionments are paying for teachers, pastors, and missionaries around the world—in Russia, Korea, and Africa, to name a few. The United Methodist Church is the only Protestant denomination allowed to maintain a permanent presence in Russia. That's supported by our missional giving!

Africa and Korea contain some of the fastest growing Christian communities in the world and the United Methodist Church has an active and visible presence in these locations.

Giving to the World Methodist Council has made it possible for churches to be established in 132 countries. United Methodists gave well over \$25 million to support victims of the 9/11 attacks, numerous hurricanes, including Hurricane Harvey here in the Coastal Bend. That's missional giving!

So far this year we have been able to pay about 41% of our commitment to the greater United Methodist Church through the Rio Texas Annual Conference of the UMC. We hope that you will pray about how you might assist so that we might more fully support our shared connection by giving sacrificially to help people in our backyard and around the world.

You may designate your gift by check or other means simply by noting that this giving is for **Christmas Miracle Offering**. Call the church office if you have questions or for assistance in any way. Thank you!

Merry Christmas! Peace!

-- Pastor Wade

### Worship Services and Sermon Titles

Sunday, Dec. 5: "A Place at the Table", (PEACE); scriptures Baruch 5:1-5 & Philippians 1: 3-11.

Sunday, Dec. 12: "How Much Is Enough?" (JOY); scriptures Isaiah 12:2-6; Luke 3:7-18

Sunday, Dec. 19: "A Room With a View" (LOVE); scriptures, Micah 5:2-51 and Luke 1: 46-55.

Friday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve, "The Inn," scriptures Isaiah 9: 2-7 and Luke 2: 1-7.

Sunday, Dec. 26 and Jan. 2: Combined Worship Services (see story on Page 11)



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# Gifts to St. John's UMC Are Received from the John and Ann Crumpler Life Trusts

Two financial gifts totalling \$156,494.36 have been received to benefit St. John's Building and Maintenance Fund. On August 7, a check in the amount of \$82,023.49 was received from the Crumpler Life Trust in memory of Ann and John Crumpler, and on November 10, a check in the amount of \$74,470.87 was received by the John E. Crumpler Estate in memory of Ann and John.

The Crumpler's daughter Cathy Crumpler Chaney of Beeville said the funds were distributed as per her parents' respective wills, with both donations designated to be used solely "for new buildings or the Building and Maintenance Fund."

John Edward and Ann Crumpler moved from Wichita Falls to Corpus Christi in June 1973. Cathy said the family (including her brother, Jeff Crumpler) visited several Methodist churches around town and found St. John's "was the one for us," adding they attended Sunday School and Church every Sunday "unless we were out of town or sick!" Both John and Ann were devoted to St. John's, participated in church ministry, and served in various leadership roles over many years.

John Edward Crumpler died on July 11, 2021. John graduated in 1959 from Louisiana State University with a BS in Petroleum Engineering and worked several years for Phillips 66 and then Expando Oil Production Company. In 1988, he partnered with Bill Thacker and Wayne Rach to establish CTR Petroleum, an oil and gas production company. After 30 years in business, CTR Petroleum officially closed in 2020.

Ann Shellberg Crumpler, who died on December 14, 2012, was an independent consultant with Mary Kay Cosmetics for 25 years and an active member of Auxiliary to Petroleum Engineers, American Association of University Women, American Contract Bridge League, and Revelairs Dance Club. At the time of her death, she and John had shared 53 years of marriage.

When Ann's mother, Vendelia Shellberg, passed away several years ago, Ann provided funding for the labyrinth flooring in Fellowship Hall in loving memory of her mother.

"Words cannot express St. John's appreciation for these two generous gifts," said Pastor Wade Lindstrom. "We will honor John and Ann's memory and their love and devotion to St. John's as we take care of our church campus and utilize these funds in our building and maintenance efforts."

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The late John and Ann Crumpler in a photo taken for the 2012 church directory



## SHARE THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT!

Church members are invited to participate in the Mission Outreach Project for Bokenkamp Children's Shelter, located just down the street from St. John's UMC. The shelter serves from 60-100 children and youth at any given time, providing housing and meals, educational classes, and counseling while staff tries to unite these children with relatives who are already living in the United States. St. John's will furnish more than 40 dozen homebaked or purchased sugar cookies, along with an assortment of toppings (chocolate chips, gumdrops, raisins, etc.), cans or tubes of frosting, and canisters of sprinkles, for the Christmas Eve event at Bokenkamp. Financial gifts are appreciated to underwrite the project. Rick Darst, project coordinator, will deliver the cookies and toppings to Bokenkamp, on December 23.

# Evalynn Bunk Remembers Her Church With Unrestricted Gift of \$34,775



Evalynn Janet Bunk

Evalynn Janet Bunk, who died on May 23, 2021, was a beloved member of St. John's UMC for 58 years. She was active in every aspect of church life and rarely missed Sunday's traditional worship service or any fellowship gathering. She was a faithful member of United Methodist Women and the Friendship Sunday School Class and served on numerous ministry teams. She served as a money counter of Sunday offerings every Monday morning and enjoyed playing Mexican Train dominoes with fellow church members.

Evalynn shared a home with her mother, Bert Bunk, also an active member of St. John's until Mrs. Bunk's death several years ago.

Evalynn earned a BS degree in Education in 1956, with teaching certifications in elementary and special education. She taught school for 34 years, including 23 at Tuloso-Midway ISD. Throughout her life, her favorite hobbies of painting and needlepoint were enjoyed.

On November 5, 2021, Evalynn's close cousin, Clarence Feagin, delivered a check to St. John's UMC with unrestricted funds of \$34,775.30.

"Evalynn was a dear person we all enjoyed knowing," said Lay Leader Chris Garcia. "She loved St. John's UMC and had a kinship with so many members over the years. This gift will have a positive impact in many areas of church life, and we will lovingly remember her generosity and how she lived her life to the fullest."

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## St. John's UMC Food Pantry News

By Cathy McRorey, Administrative Assistant

We've had a great November at the St. John's Food Pantry, thanks to your support! We have had a steady increase in the number of clients that we have assisted each month. We are still not up to where we were pre-COVID, but we are encouraged by the number of people who have come to see us. We are about 50/50 on new and returning clients at the present.

We greeted and gave food to seven people who came from an adult daycare facility to get assistance. We saw our friend Vilma, who is a caregiver to one of our regular clients, and were gifted with homemade Pancit and Lumpia. Yum!

Earlier this fall, we received some wonderful hygiene kits made lovingly by Pam Glover, Brenda Glover, and Janet Berridge! Thank you so much on behalf of our clients.

We are well stocked for food and are able to give our clients three bags of staples to help them feed themselves and their families. Included in the bags are dried fruit, nuts, cereal, rice, beans, canned fruits and vegetables, juice cups, canned tuna, and other tasty food items furnished by the Coastal Bend Food Bank.

The Food Pantry also partnered with the veterans (HUD-VASH) meal last month, so in addition to delicious homemade



Thanksgiving meal, the veterans also got grocery staples they could use to make themselves more meals. Some items we would welcome over the next two weeks in preparation for the Christmas holidays are:

- \* Canned pie filling or pudding mix
- \* Cream of Mushroom Soup
- \* Boxed Stuffing
- \* Canned chicken broth
- \* Fried Onions
- \* Hygiene items (small sizes are great): shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothpaste, comb, washcloth, etc.

Thank you so much for your continued support of St. John's Food Pantry. It really does make a big difference in the lives of many people in this community. Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated.

# Schism in the Church – Progressives and Remaining Liberationists, Part 6

By Rick Darst, Church Member  
and Laity Delegate to the Rio Texas  
Annual Conference

6th in a Series

In this article, information is included about groups that wish to remain in the United Methodist Church (UMC). Readers should not assume that these articles will cover the gamut of the theological, philosophical and political differences within the existing UMC.

Rather, they will touch on a few of the unique ideas, some of which are critical. I suppose that is why I found the second article in a Baptist magazine. 3



Rick Darst

**Editor's Note:** In the mid-1970's, language was added to the United Methodist Book of Discipline (one of the Doctrinal documents that governs the United Methodist Church (UMC)) that required that the UMC would not permit ordination of LGBTQ persons as UMC clergy nor for UMC clergy to conduct same-sex marriages. These prohibitions have become contentious since that time to the point that the UMC will likely negotiate a separation in the upcoming 2022 General Conference of the United Methodist Church. The General Conference is an international conference that has been postponed in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the past five months, Rick Darst, one of St. John's lay delegates to the Rio Texas Annual Conference, has researched the topic and selected writings from respected theologians and others to try to explain the expected action that seems to be set to happen at the 2022 General Conference of the UMC.

The article this month, titled "Progressives and Remaining Liberationist" is the sixth article on the anticipated schism within the United Methodist Church (UMC).

## Progressives and Remaining Liberationists

There is a significant bloc of United Methodists in the United States and Europe who plan to remain in the UMC and whose top priority remains changing UMC policy to allow for the ordination of LGBTQ+ individuals and gay marriages. Reconciling Ministries Network and The Liberation Project are expressions of this group, and Progressive concerns are also included in UMC Next and Out of Chaos: Creation, though these groups also contain other elements (as indicated below).

For many Progressives, anti-racist work is also a significant issue, though for Progressives in the United States, racism is understood in predominantly US-centric rather than global terms. Progressives and remaining liberationists are open to other issues, and some individuals are also part of other groups advocating for institutional reform, unity, and/or regionalization. For many Progressives, though, these other issues continue to be interpreted through the lens of their impact on sexuality. 1

## Top-Down Schism Plans Ignore Local United Methodist Churches' New Reality by Cynthia B. Astle...4, 3

David W. Scott, mission theologian at the General Board of Global Ministries (UMC), has taken a deep dive into UMC politics. He cites four new issues before the church: gay marriage and ordination, denominational separation, regionalization, and denominational institutions. ...4

Reconciling Ministries Network offers an example of the "progressives and remaining liberationists" faction in its response to the second postponement of General Conference: "And what continues to be clear and requires no waiting,"

said Scott, "is our calling to be fully engaged in ministries that prepare the way for a Christ-centered, just and equitable future UMC at a more local level. This work is so important, and the Reconciling fruit it bears in our local churches, communities, and annual conferences is inspirational!" 2

Jae Hyoung Choi, Korean missionary in residence with the General Board of Global Ministries (UMC), comes closest to the reality facing local congregations. He writes: "The coronavirus has exposed the bare face of the world system that is tainted with structural injustices and exploitations. ... This dangerous virus has magnified an intersectionality of the pandemic with the other social problems, like poverty, racism and climate injustices."

Choi advocates that the UMC adopt a stance of "jubilee," the Jewish concept of a restorative practice prescribed every 50 years in which debts are forgiven, slaves are freed, and social injustices are addressed.

He writes: "The pandemic has been a time for the church to examine its mission. All Christians want the post-pandemic church mission to be a renewed pilgrimage towards Jesus' mission of giving the world life and giving it to the full."

"Jubilee" is a concept that few congregations can grasp at the moment, he added. A year into the worldwide pandemic, local churches are facing:

- Loss of constituents from in-person gatherings at the same time that virtual connections via the internet have increased significantly.
- Increased costs caused by the addition of virtual services requiring equipment, staff, and technical expertise against an income decline caused by membership losses.
- Continued expenses for the upkeep of often-aging

(Continued on Page 6)

# Progressives and Remaining Liberationalists, Part 6

(Continued from Page 5)

- buldings that stand unused.
- Uncertainty over how to choose and design ministries for needs and in settings created by the pandemic.
- Staff and volunteer burnout from pandemic stress.
- Church members' changed ministry needs caused by experiencing the pandemic, particularly unresolved grief at loved ones' deaths from COVID-19 without the benefit that communal mourning such as in-person funerals affords.

None of the legislative proposals around the UMC's divisive theo-political conflict addresses these on-the-ground realities. Part of this lack stems from the fact that the deadline for General Conference petitions passed in late 2019, long before the coronavirus pandemic was identified. General Conference organizers have exacerbated this gap by refusing to re-open the petition process for new proposals despite two postponements.

In essence, the vast majority of United Methodists have moved on to a new pragmatic reality of "doing church" based on pandemic experience while the UMC's topmost leaders (especially the most distant poles of its political spectrum) have remained mired in the concerns of a bygone era.

Progressives and liberationists persist in seeing the church through a singular lens of its stances on human sexuality, while nearly three-fourths of U.S. congregations made their peace with LGBTQ rights and presence even before the pandemic began. Traditionalists persist in seeing the United Methodist conflict as one of preserving historic church authority, ignoring the fact that both theology and morality are being shaped by forces beyond the church's control.

A special-called one-day General Conference planned on May 8, 2021, was postponed because of the continuing pandemic. Called by the Council of Bishops, the agenda was to include an agenda of 12 items aimed at loosening the UMC's administrative restrictions to allow it to function until a full General Conference can meet to decide the denomination's fate. That General Conference meeting is now scheduled in August/September 2022, and it will set the agenda.

Already, traditionalists are pressuring General Conference organizers to take up legislation that would enact the Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation, an independently negotiated agreement that would allow traditionalists to form their own denomination with \$25 million in seed money from the existing UMC.

Traditionalists recently announced the proposed formation of a new Global Methodist Church founded on strict

theological and moral principles, including exclusion of LGBTQ individuals.

Proponents of other measures, such as the Christmas Covenant advocating unity through regionalization, and a "new vision" for the UMC outlined by another group called Out of Chaos, Creation, have expressed dismay at the effort to give precedence to the Protocol.

The latest reaction to the traditionalists' campaign, called The Alaska Omnibus Proposal, ties together all petitions submitted thus far on the church's future, including recommendations from the UMC's pensions agency on clergy retirements and on regionalizing governance from its ministry coordinating council.

Yet even these efforts at inclusion and efficiency fail to address the most fundamental concept of human systems design: form follows function.

If the United Methodist branch of Christ's church hopes to remain effective in the 21st century, it must jettison its partisan battles of the past and deal with the world as it is, namely the changes that the coronavirus pandemic has wrought in how the church functions in society.

In a 2008 book, the late religion expert Phyllis Tickle called our era "the Great Emergence," reflecting historic 500-year cycles when new forms of Christianity came into existence through gradual evolution.

Instead, the coronavirus pandemic has caused the Great Upheaval, a time of shock that instantly transformed human interaction into new patterns before corresponding social systems could be established.

Perhaps, as commentator Jeremy Smith has noted, "The United Methodist Church would do better to remake itself according to the adaptations being used by its local congregations than by attempting to reform or establish new institutions based on models from bygone eras. ... 4, 2

*This article was edited by Cynthia B. Astle, a veteran journalist who has covered the worldwide United Methodist Church at all levels for more than 30 years. She serves as editor of United Methodist Insight, an online journal she founded in 2011. 2,3*

## Citations

1. A New Era in United Methodist Politics: New Parties — Christmas Covenant
2. Top-down schism plans ignore local United Methodist churches' new reality — Baptist News Global
3. About — Baptist News Global
4. ... indicating omission. Omissions are either duplication of existing thought, wording not clearly to the point of the article, wording not included here due to space limitations or areas where UMC as a unit agrees on (Christ, Trinity, the 10 commandments, loving our God, loving each other, etc.)

## Children's Learning Center News

The Children's Learning Center (CLC), a licensed childcare facility affiliated with St. John's UMC, will hold its Christmas parties on December 17. Parents will be furnishing snacks, and children will celebrate "Wear Your Christmas PJs Day."

The nine classrooms, serving Nursery, Toddler, Twos, Two and 1/2, Threes, 3 and 1/2, 4 and 5's, have been utilizing curriculum and activities focused on *Winter Around Me, I Am Growing, Christmas is a Happy Time, Children Love Colors, Opposites, Traditional Tales and Rhymes, and Making Good Choices.*

The CLC will be closed from December 23 through January 2, said Director Adela Garcia. The CLC will reopen on January 3.

The staff and director wish all CLC families a safe and blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

## Thy Kingdom Come Service



By Adam Mathews

Hello Church family:

We are excited to inform you on all things happening at the heavy metal service called *Thy Kingdom Come* (TKC) this month. We will be posting Advent readings on our Facebook page, @thykingdomcomecc, every week in honor of the Advent season.

We also want to join in thanksgiving for our guitar player of the worship band, and in GratitudeTX, Ramon Dorame and his wife Ashley Dorame in welcoming into the world their second child this coming month!

We are preparing to Worship At Full Volume at our live in-person service on Sunday, December 12, at 7pm in the Fellowship Hall. This will be our last service and event of the year. and we are excited for what 2022 has in store!

JOIN US ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, at 7 PM!

## Did you know you can use your IRA RMD to make a contribution directly to your church?

What many retirees don't know is they can donate all, or a portion of, their required minimum distribution (RMD) directly to charity. It's called a qualified charitable distribution or QCD. This is a great way to make contributions for your favorite charities.

Qualified charitable distributions do not provide a charitable deduction for taxpayers, regardless of whether you itemize deductions. Instead, with a qualified charitable distribution, a check is sent directly from an IRA to charity. This allows the donor to exclude the amount from taxable income. This is a great way to take your annual RMD without being subject income taxes and support your favorite causes.

Below are additional considerations for making a charitable contribution directly from your IRA.

- RMDs can push retirees into a higher tax bracket. Since distributions are ordinary taxable income, it can push some retirees into a higher marginal tax bracket.
- Medicare surtax. Required minimum distributions also increase the taxpayer's modified adjusted gross income, or MAGI, which could trigger the 3.8% Medicare surtax. The surtax applies to the lesser of net investment income or MAGI in excess of \$200,000 for individuals or \$250,000 for married couples filing jointly.
- Taxing Social Security. Even modest withdrawals from a retirement account can cause Social Security benefits to become taxable, up to 85% for single filers with income above \$34,000 annually or married couples with income above \$44,000.
- Medicare Part B and D premiums are calculated using a taxpayer's MAGI from the prior, prior year. So large RMDs can cause sharp increases to your Medicare costs, with the wealthiest taxpayers shouldering up to 80% of the cost.

If you have any questions regarding making a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA, please feel free to contact me:  
---Darron Bergstrom. Leadership Board Financial Chair

**Please note: This information was provided from a recent Forbes article dated August 23, 2021.**

# Order Form for Poinsettia Plant(s)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I/We would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettias for placement in the worship areas on Sunday, December 19, at \$15 each. (You may pick up your poinsettia(s) following the Dec. 24 Christmas Eve services. Unclaimed plants will be delivered to our homebound members on Dec. 27.

Please mark for:

( ) In Celebration of \_\_\_\_\_

( ) In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

( ) In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

The deadline to receive orders is Wednesday noon, Dec. 15; please include payment with your order.



You may clip this order form and return it with your payment in the offering plate or at the church office at 5300 S. Alameda.

## DECEMBER Church Calendar

Sunday, Dec. 5--Second Sunday of Advent; Holy Communion (See story, Page 1)

Wednesday, Dec. 8--United Methodist Men, 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall for refreshments, election of officers, and a planning meeting for 2022. (See story, Page 1)

Thursday, Dec. 9--Ray High School Choir holiday concert rehearsal, 11:30 a.m. in Sanctuary; free community program at 7 p.m. (See story, Page 9)

Sunday, Dec. 12--Third Sunday of Advent

Tuesday, Dec. 14--Leadership Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m., church office

Sunday, Dec. 19--Fourth Sunday of Advent

Wednesday/Thursday, Dec. 22-23--Food Pantry closed; church office closed

Friday, Dec. 24-- Christmas Eve Services (church office closed)  
4:30 p.m., Sanctuary, Candlelight & Communion  
6 p.m., Family Service, Community Life Building, Candlelight & Communion  
9:30 p.m., Sanctuary, Lessons & Carols, Communion

Saturday, Dec. 25--MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Sunday, Dec. 26--Combined worship service, 10 a.m., Sanctuary

Dec. 27-Dec. 30: Regular church office hours observed; Food Pantry on Dec. 29-30

Friday, Dec. 31 & Saturday, Jan. 1--New Year's Eve and New Year's Day!

Sunday, Jan. 2--Combined worship service, 10 a.m., Community Life Building

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Johanna Daugherty, Scott Wilshusen
- 2 Kim Bryce
- 4 David Pallotti
- 6 Gary Schwartz
- 8 Rick Smith
- 10 Brianna Balderas
- 11 John Fusselman, Cindy Straub, Aiden Waldrop
- 16 Gaylord Hoyt
- 17 Betty Collins, Bill Shaffer
- 20 Anita Harris
- 21 Debra Patterson
- 23 Betty Thompson
- 26 Jonathan Hamende, Roseann Zammiello
- 28 Victoria Barton, Sara Olevitch
- 31 Austin Brownlee

If you are missing from this birthday list or if you see any errors in the listing, please call the church office at 991-4342.

# AROUND THE CHURCH



Have you heard The Celestial Bells recently? These musicians are terrific and have been playing beautiful pieces. Directed by Kim Bryce, the bells are playing one Sunday each month in the Traditional worship service.



United Methodist Men's president Robert Garza, and members Bryan Thompson, Judi Edwards, and Jim Falwell were all smiles as they distributed the 164 pies ordered by church members and friends for the 2021 holiday season.



St. John's member Melissa Brownlee (now residing in Alice, TX) was all smiles recently as she visited Karen Felts and Willard Haskell in the church office.

## SAVE THE DATE!

# Ray High Choir Concert Thursday, December 9

Ready to hear some beautiful choral music? Plan to be in the St. John's Sanctuary with family members, friends, and neighbors for a performance of seasonal music (both religious and secular) at 11:30 a.m., Thursday, December 9.

Music Director Kim Bryce will accompany about 50 Choir students from W. B. Ray High School for a 30-40 minute concert in the St. John's Sanctuary. The performance serves as a rehearsal for the students who will present their free Winter Concert at 7 p.m. that same evening in the Sanctuary. The free concert will draw the students' families and the community.

The church will host a lasagna and salad luncheon meal for the students following the midday concert. Please contact Gerri Cason to see what assistance in serving or clean-up might be needed.

## Church Leadership Board To Meet Tuesday, Dec. 14

The Leadership Board, comprised of 12 church members elected by the congregation last May, will meet on Tuesday, December 14, at 6:30 p.m. at the church, for its monthly meeting. Glenda Sanders serves as chair and Robyn Cobb as vice chair. The other 10 members of the Board are Bryan Thompson, Bruce Francis, Chris Garcia, Janice Cagle, Benny Cason, Danna Sharpe, Bruce Hamende, Michael Shaffer, Darron Bergstrom, and Malia Shumaker.

Church members are cordially invited to attend the meeting as observers. Questions about the agenda or specific business items can be directed to Glenda Sanders.

Recent business before the Leadership Board was approval of the pastor's compensation package for 2022 and approval of roof repairs between the Administration Building and the CLC.

Setting up Ministry Teams and engaging every church member to choose a team to serve on is the next order of business for the Leadership Board. Some teams that are already active are Building and Grounds teams, Kitchen, Hospitality & Bereavement, Offering Counters, and Worship. Other teams needed are Mission & Outreach, Scholarship, Children's Ministry, and Youth Ministry.

Be watching for more information on ministry teams. Where do you see yourself serving?

# The History of Chrismons & Christments

By Elaine Clanton Harpine

## CHRISMONS

The first Chrismons were made by Frances Kipps Spencer at Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia in 1957. She strung white and gold beads on wire to make the first original Chrismons. The word Chrismon comes from Christ and monogram.

Mrs. Spencer used letters from the Greek alphabet to emphasize Jesus' name. The very popular Chi Rho is even displayed on our Chrismon tree at St. John's. The Chi (X) and Rho (P) form a monogram using the first two Greek letters for Christ. Mrs. Spencer also used traditional Christian symbols, such as the triangle and circle. The circle always represents God's never-ending love. The triangle symbolizes the Trinity—God the father, Jesus the son, and the Holy Spirit.

Many new patterns have been developed over the years, and Chrismons continue to grace church sanctuaries every Christmas. They are beautiful, and they remind us that the birth of Jesus is the reason that we celebrate Christmas.

## CHRISTMENTS

Christments were first made and displayed in 1994 at the First United Methodist Church in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. I tried unsuccessfully for many years to teach children the meaning of Chrismons. We had a wonderful time making chrismons out of Styrofoam, felt, and naturally gold glitter, but the children could not remember the Greek symbols. Therefore, the true meaning was never clear to them.

I was the director of the children's worship program at First Church at the time. It was a large program -- anywhere from 20 to 70 children, ranging in ages from 4 to 12. I wanted an ornament that even my 4-year-olds could make and be proud of. I created Christments. The word Christment comes from the word Christ and ornament.

Christments are ornaments that tell the story of the life and teachings of Jesus. Christments use picture symbols: a biblical house, a church, the nativity, a donkey, and a beautiful butterfly to remind us of our new life through Jesus Christ. Christments are made by stringing clear and yellow beads on chenille stems or pipe cleaners. The clear beads represent the liturgical white color used at all special holidays in the church. The yellow color represents the life and teaching of Jesus and adds a special warm glow to the Christment tree.

Christments became an annual tradition. The children made Christments and explained their meaning through a play every year. The same play that our children and youth presented at St. John's a few years ago. Christments are easy to make, and they remind everyone of the Christmas Story.



Photo of Christment Tree created by Elaine Harpine in 1994

## HOW TO USE A TAX-EXEMPTION FORM

By Barb Benton, Bookkeeper

Calling church volunteers! Do you buy things for the church? If you do, you are entitled to use a sales tax exemption form!

How do you fill it out? Top section: Put the church name, address and phone number. The church email address and fax number are optional.

Middle section: I suggest you contact the store directly (before you start to shop). In most cases, the store can rubber stamp the middle section with its store information.

See the example, I have typed all the valid info needed to claim the exemption in the 'Purchaser claims this exemption for the following reason'.

Who signs and dates the form? You do! You are the person certifying to the retail establishment that the goods or services are for church use and not personal use, and therefore exempt from sales tax.

You can get copies from the Admin office (near the fire extinguisher, opposite the mailboxes). Keep extra copies in your glove and or purse so you don't have to print one from home if the church office is closed.

You can also go to the State Comptroller's website at <https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/sales/forms/> to download and print the form 01-339 at your home computer.



**Special thanks to church members and friends of all ages who helped decorate St. John's Sanctuary on November 21 with wreaths, Chrismon Tree, nativity, and Advent lights for this blessed season.**

**THANK YOU! THANK YOU!**  
(See related photo on Page 1)



Merry Christmas  
&  
Happy New Year!

Combined Worship Services are planned Sunday, December 26, and Sunday, January 2. The December 26 service will be at 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary, and the January 2 service will be at 10 a.m. in the Community Life Building. Please note these time changes and plan to join your St. John's family of faith in worship.

## Providing Lunch Meals for Veterans



A mission project to provide a complete Thanksgiving meal to about 80 local veterans and their caseworkers in the HUD-VASH program was successfully accomplished on Nov. 18. Many thanks to Gerri Cason who coordinated the project and to all who provided food dishes and desserts and/or helped with serving and clean-up.



Pictured above (above left and counter clockwise) are food servers Robert Garza, Jack Pace, Pastor Wade, Benny and Gerri Cason; dessert team Janice Cagle, Connie Hahn, Chris Garcia, Glenda Sanders, and Robyn Cobb; Benny Cason sampling a dessert; and red bags filled with Food Pantry items which were delivered to the veterans by their caseworkers. Several church members helped underwrite purchase of the sliced ham and turkey, the to-go boxes, and other items. Special thanks to Marti Veith, a teacher at Flour Bluff ISD, who asked her students to prepare 100 greeting cards so that each veteran's box of food had a greeting card attached, thanking them for their service. Thank you, Marti!

## Pumpkin Patch Appreciation Luncheon

More than 45 volunteers of all ages who helped make this year's Pumpkin Patch successful gathered on Nov. 14 to enjoy a complimentary barbecue plate lunch in the Community Life Building. Pictured below are sisters Pam Glover and Debi Francis helping pour lemonade and tea; Christy Olson, Robyn Cobb, and Connie Hahn who served the food; and the crowd that enjoyed the meal and fellowship. In the November 2021 SteepleNotes, it was noted that gross sales at the Pumpkin Patch were \$23,748. Thanks to everyone who devoted their time, energy, and resources to the Patch.





# St. John's UMC Prayer

**Hospitalized:** Marilyn Henderson  
**Rehab:** Dorothy Tullos  
**Recovering at Home:** JoAnn Holland, Roseann Zammiello, Matt Thompson, William Everett, Norma Taylor, Betty Allen, Roma Onwiler, Jan DeCovic

Please pray for those on our prayer list. If you have someone you want to add or remove, please call the church office @ 361-991-4342 or email Catherine McRorey @ catherine.sjmethodist@gmail.com. Prayer concerns will be removed after 30 days unless staff is notified to keep individuals on the list.

Our Church  
 Our Nation's Leaders  
 US Military  
 World Leadership  
 St. John's CLC  
 All Teachers & Students  
 CC Metro Ministries  
 The Wenholz House and director Bruce Armstrong  
 Revival of Church Membership  
 Lives lost at the Houston Concert & Their Families  
 Sally Alvarado & Family of San Antonio  
 Katherine Anderson  
 Travis Anderson  
 Cathy Barber  
 Cassie Barber  
 Catie Bauer  
 Gene Bauer  
 Jim Bauer  
 Robin Blue  
 Iris Brayton  
 Tyler and Melissa Brownlee  
 Nancy Busby  
 Phyllis and Tommy Busby  
 Valerie Caldwell  
 Calderon/Hernandez Family  
 Jeff Caravantes  
 Marcia Caravantes  
 Sharon Cassidy  
 Rene Cervantes  
 Margo Chapman  
 Mildred  
 Betty Collins

Norma Conyers  
 Cox Family  
 Josh W. Cox  
 Robert Cox  
 Josh Cox  
 Lina Crumpler  
 Dana D'Amore  
 John & Judi Edwards  
 William Everett (Betty Thompson's brother)  
 Cooper Floyd  
 Judy Forbes  
 Forrest, Jr.  
 Anita Garza  
 Robert Garza  
 Amy Glasson  
 Pam Glover  
 Bob Goodner & Family  
 Maria Guilleu  
 Leonard Hahn (father of Carole Salsberry)  
 Donald Hahn  
 Grant Haralson  
 Marilyn Henderson  
 Russell Higgins  
 Cathi Hobbs  
 Hopkins Family  
 Kelli Huey and her daughter Kaylee  
 Cathie Huhn  
 Thad Hunt  
 James Hunter  
 Elene Johnson  
 Hydie Johnson  
 Stacia Johnston  
 Phyllis Jones  
 Ann Jordan  
 Candy Keiper  
 Aundrea Montuori Keim (Glenda Sanders' niece)  
 Long/Lester Families  
 Anna Matt

Tommie Mercer  
 Lily Major-Hunter  
 Mildred  
 Connie Moore (Carrie Darst's sister)  
 Joyce Morgan  
 Darlene Murray  
 Nora, Freddie & Son  
 Norma & Robert  
 Judi and Kenneth Oestreich  
 Todd Olson  
 Rev. Harold Onwiler  
 Family of Joshua Ogden  
 Dolores Pace  
 Jack Pace  
 Mike Pace  
 Mary Palmer  
 Debra Patterson  
 Roger Pigott  
 Jenna Purdy & Family  
 Dottie Ramella  
 Amie Ramsdell  
 Mary Lee Ress  
 Anthony Robinson

Summer & Jacob Ramos  
 Alex Robert  
 Rilla Roots  
 Todd Rumfield  
 Tavian Salas  
 Charles Sanders  
 Fay Sassman  
 Sarah & Billie  
 Betty Sebring  
 Danna Sharpe  
 Ivan & Lyneve Shaver  
 Dr. Shaw  
 Tom Shearer  
 Suzy Shepard  
 Robert Siguero  
 Susan Skidmore  
 David Skidmore  
 Teresa Skidmore  
 Jennifer Staiger  
 Sarah Steiger (niece of Willard Haskell)  
 Sandy Thompson  
 Richard & Angela Strong  
 Terry & Marie

Patrick Taber  
 Charles Teas  
 Robert Taylor  
 Earlene Thorne  
 Ashley Tomek (Chris Garcia's granddaughter)  
 James Van Horn  
 Marti Veith  
 Kimbo Ward  
 Richard and Sonya Warren  
 Davris White  
 Sam & Sue Windsor  
 Doug and Sharon Winnek  
 Harley Wilson (Jean Shiver's brother-in-law)  
 Jeffery Zammiello  
 Those suffering from Addiction  
 Those alone during the Holidays

## Heart and Soul Resale Shop Sets December 4 & 11 Shopping Days

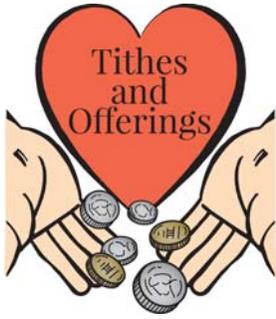
Heart and Soul Resale Shop, established late last spring by a group of local churches, has announced two December shopping dates at its location at 221 S. Staples and Agnes (the former B. L. Guess Lighting Company business site). The community is invited to shop...so help spread the word! Proceeds will benefit the community.

Shopping dates/time: 9 a.m.-2 p.m. --Saturdays, December 4 and December 18. Cash sales only (no checks, debit cards, or credit cards.)

You'll find a terrific selection of clothing, housewares, furniture, filing cabinets, lamps, jewelry, books, shoes, electronics, and more---all donated through the generosity of local and area donors.

**Donations** are received on Mondays and Tuesdays only from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. **Volunteers** interested in helping in any capacity can email Cheryl Villanueva (Asbury UMC) at [chervil@stx.rr.com](mailto:chervil@stx.rr.com) or call or text her at 361-947-9358.

## Pledges Totalling \$143,090 Received from 43 Individuals/Families



The Finance Committee reported earlier this week that 43 Estimate of Giving cards have been received in support of the 2022 church budget. The 43 pledges represent a giving total of \$143,090. If you have not turned in your pledge card, which was included in a churchwide mailing in mid-November, please respond in the near future if possible so that the Stewardship Team can begin working on the church budget for 2022.

Additionally, \$1,300 has been received as of November 14, 2021, for the Thanksgiving offering to benefit the church's assigned Apportionments to the Rio Texas Conference. The check has already been sent to the Conference office. Pastor Wade Lindstrom said 41% of the assigned total of \$47,939 has been remitted toward Apportionments. Sincere thanks to all who participated in this special offering. A letter from the church to be mailed this coming week will also designate the Christmas Miracle Offering for apportioned giving. Your generous response will be sincerely appreciated.

## Seekers Class Enjoys Progressive Dinner

The Seekers Sunday School Class held a Progressive Dinner on Nov. 20, with three stops--Appetizers at 6:30 pm at the home of Benny and Gerri Cason; Dinner at three houses at 7:30 p.m.--hosted by Robert and Cathi Garza, Marianne Robert, and Ty & Robyn Cobb; and Dessert at Ty and Robyn Cobb's.

The dinner menu included Apple Cider Chicken Marsala, Wild Rice Pilaf, Brussels Sprouts with bacon, pecans, and cranberries, Garden Salad/ Dressing and bread/butter.



Thanks to class member Cathi Garza for providing these photos.



**Mission: To help men grow in Christ, so others may know Christ.**



## St. John's United Methodist Men

**THANKS to everyone who purchased one or more of the 164 pies ordered for the 2021 Pie Sale in support of St. John's United Methodist Men missional giving to several charities.**

**All men and guests are cordially invited to a Special Fellowship/Election of Officers/2022 Planning Meeting on Wednesday evening, Dec. 8, at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. (See story on Page 1; RSVP encouraged)**

### UMM Card Ministry

The United Methodist Men will send a greeting card expressing appropriate sentiments for birthdays, get well, condolences, etc. to all names and addresses submitted to them. Access the SJUMC website and fill out the form. Gary Schwartz, Secretary, handles all correspondence.

<https://www.sjmethodist.com/umm-card-request/>

## Memorial Gifts

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 Funds. The funds include Building, Choir, Youth, Scholarship, Food Pantry, Worship, Care/Concern/Bereavement and Undesignated for general church needs. All gifts, in any amount, are sincerely appreciated. Gifts may be given anonymously, if desired.

In loving memory of John and Ann Crumpler, two generous gifts were made possible by the Crumpler Family Trust. (See story on Page 3.)

In loving memory of Evalynn Janet Bunk, a generous gift was made to St. John's UMC through her estate. (See story on Page 4.)

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## MESSAGE FROM OUR BOOKKEEPER

Dear Church Members and Friends:

December 31st will be here before you know it! Please have all 2021 contributions in the church office no later than Friday, December 31 (New Years Eve), to be counted on your 2021 year end giving statement.

You can deliver to the church, place in offering plates during worship, or use the postal slot in the front door, depending on office hours.

If you mail your contribution to the church, IRS rules say churches are to count envelopes postmarked on or before 12/31/2021 as received in 2021.

The tentative mailing date by the church for 2021 year-end giving statements is 01/10/2022. If you do not receive your 2021 year-end giving statement by 01/17/2022, please contact Barb or Cathy in the church office to request a duplicate copy.

Sincerely, Barb Benton, Bookkeeper  
St. John's United Methodist Church

## Check Out These Activities!

**Wednesday, Dec. 8:** The Wednesday Morning Bible Study meets at 11 a.m. at the church to continue its Advent devotions, and all are invited. The group will have a new study beginning after January 1.

**Wednesday, Dec. 8:** 12 noon; Shepherding Care Team will meet to assemble gift bags for St. John's Homebound. Contact Judi Edwards if you can participate. The bags will be delivered to homebound members after the Dec. 12 worship services by church members. If you can help with either assembly or delivery, thanks!

**Thursday, Dec. 9:** 5:30 p.m. Scout Pack 225, based at Montclair Elementary School, meets in the Youth Building.

**CALLING ALL YOUTH!** St. John's FLOCK (youth members Grades 6-12) will gather Sunday, Dec. 12 from 3-5 p.m. at Pastor Wade Lindstrom's home for a Christmas Party. Call Leslie Albrecht, director of Student Ministries, for details. The youth began a four-week Advent Study last week titled "The Heart That Grew Three Sizes." Children's Sunday School also meets on Sundays at 10 a.m.



## Update from St. John's United Methodist Women

Nine UMW members attended an informal luncheon meeting on November 10 in the Community Life Building to participate in the annual World Thank Offering and begin discussing its 2022 calendar and program ideas. The World Thank Offering is one of the primary channels of giving to support UMW mission.

Attending were Carole Salsberry, president; Chris Garcia, vice president; Karen Van Kirk, Louise Wagner, Joyce Zimmerman, Betty Collins, Suzy Shepard, Glenda Sanders, and Danna Sharpe. Unable to attend but sending their regards and support were Nancy Busby, Anita Harris, and Mary Falwell.

Several of those present also turned in their personal pledges to mission for the 2022 year. The St. John's unit has pledged \$1,500 for 2022 UMW mission projects supporting women, children, and youth.

St. John's UMW unit hopes to plan a January meeting to focus on 2022 planning, fund raising, election of officers; and approval of a 2022 budget. Be watching for information about the January meeting.

### Looking Ahead: UMW Calendar Dates

**Jan. 21-25, UMW Rio Conference  
Legislative Event, in Austin.**

**Coastal Bend District Leadership  
Training, Feb. 12, at FUMC  
Goliad.**

## Did You Know...

United Methodist Women is the largest denominational faith organization for women, with approximately 800,000 members whose mission is fostering spiritual growth, developing leaders, and advocating for justice. Members raise up to \$20 million each year for programs and projects related to women, children, and youth in the United States and in more than 100 countries around the world.

United Methodist Women and The United Methodist Church's principles and values include:

- Promoting the empowerment of women, children, and youth.
- Promoting anti-racism and multiculturalism.
- Promoting inclusion and equity.
- Promoting fair labor practices.
- Promoting economic and environmental stewardship and sustainability.



UMW President Carol Salsberry visits with those who attended the Nov. 10 "let's regroup" meeting--the first in-person gathering since the pandemic began in March 2020.

**The Vision of United Methodist Women:  
Turning faith, hope and love into action  
on behalf of women, children, and youth  
around the world.**



# Reminder

## ONLINE WORSHIP CONTINUES!

Join fellow worshippers on Sunday mornings at 10:50 a.m. for the 11 a.m. online worship service. Great sermon, beautiful music, and video clips.

Tune in at 10:50 a.m. to enjoy online chat with fellow church members and friends near and far:

<https://sjmethodist.online.church/> or  
<https://www.facebook.com/SJUMC>

Special thanks to Adam Mathews, Pastor Wade, and others for their work with on-line worship.

**“GREAT IS YOUR FAITHFULNESS....”**

## Your Tithes & Offerings Support Ministries

As St. John's enters the last month of the financial year, the Leadership Board encourages all members and friends to stay current if possible with their 2021 pledges and offerings.

And if you are able, please consider making a special Christmas Miracle Offering to support apportioned giving. (See Pastor Wade's article on Page 2.)

There are four ways to give: In person, by mail, online through the church website, or by phone text. Many church members, guests, and friends find using the text option is convenient and easy to do.

Using your cell phone, just text the \$ amount you want to give to 361-541-6512. Click on the link that pops up on your phone and follow the instructions. If you have previously set up your giving this way, just text the amount and hit send.

Your faithful, consistent, and generous gifts support all of St. John's ministries.



**Interested in Playing Bridge or Learning To Play?  
Check out the Tuesday Bridge group at St. John's!**

**Tuesdays, December 14 and 28;  
and January 11 and 25; 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
Group meets in Room 1,  
St. John's UMC Administration Bldg.**

## 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 & Tonya Claunch**, Sunday/Weekend Custodians

**Adela Garcia**, Children's Learning Center Director

**Adam Mathews**, Worship and Online Technician/TKC

**Cathy McRorey**, Administrative Assistant

**Ben Seskin**, Weekday Custodian

**Sharon Staiger**, Nursery Director

### CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

Location: 5300 S. Alameda, Corpus Christi, TX 78412

Church Telephone: 361-991-4342

Church FAX: 361-991-1840

E-mail Address: st.johnsumccc@gmail.com

Website: www.sjmethodist.com

**OFFICE HOURS:** Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday,  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Thursday, 9 a.m.-noon; closed Friday.

**FOOD PANTRY:** Wednesdays and Thursdays, 9 a.m.-Noon.

**CHILDREN'S LEARNING CENTER (CLC):** Open 7:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Call Director Adela Garcia at 991-4780 about enrollment or general information.

**WORSHIP SERVICES:** Two worship services every Sunday-- Traditional service at 9 a.m. in the Sanctuary and Contemporary service at 11:17 a.m. in the Community Life Building. Holy Communion is served on the first Sunday of each month at both services. *Thy Kingdom Come* heavy metal worship service is held monthly on the second Sunday at 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. (No *Thy Kingdom Come* service in December)

### 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 and Facebook. Printed copies are also available at the church. Deadline for the January 2022 issue is Dec. 26. Editor: Chris Garcia, 991-2784 or 244-4193

Email: garciachris1714@gmail.com



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