



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 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 bulletings, help with offering collection, and help 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

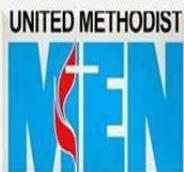
4:30 p.m., Sanctuary, Candlelight & Communion

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 Vice President Bryan Thompson. The agenda will introduce the officers for the upcoming year, 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 or call or text him at 361-944-2125. All are cordially invited to come. (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 for 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:

(Last Sunday) Nov. 28: "Making Room" (HOPE); scriptures Jeremiah 33: 14-16 and Psalm 25:4-5

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

Sunday, Dec. 12: "How Much Is Enough?" (JOY); scriptures

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. (see schedule on Page 1)

Sunday, Dec. 26: Combined Traditional/Contemporary worship, 10 a.m., location?

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.

(Space here for family quotes and also quote from Pastor Wade)
(Chris suggested draft sentence below to tie in church history....)

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.



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. We will furnish several dozen homebaked or purchased sugar cookies, along with an assortment of toppings (chocolate chips, gumdrops, raisins), cans of frosting, and canisters of sprinkles, for the Christmas Eve event at Bokenkamp. Financial gifts 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 her 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 cousin, Clarence Feagin, delivered a check to St. John's UMC with unrestricted funds of \$34,775.30.

Quotes here from Clarence Feagin, or Pastor Wade, or Darron

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 so 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, 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: shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothpaste, 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 Hyong 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.

Progressives and Remaining Liberationalists, Part 6

(Continued from Page 4)

- Continued expenses for the upkeep of often-aging buildings 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.

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.)

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 benefits 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 place or at the church office at 5300 S. Alameda.

DECEMBER Church Calendar

Sunday, Dec. 5--Second Sunday of Advent; Holy Communion.

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 on 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 on Page xxx)

Sunday, Dec. 12--Third Sunday of Advent

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

Sunday, Dec. 19--Fourth Sunday of Advent

dates for office closed

Friday, Dec. 24-- Christmas Eve Services:

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., location

dates for office closed

Friday, Dec. 31--New Year's Eve

Sunday, Jan. 2--Combined worship service, 10 a.m., location

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



Celestial Bells



UMM Pies



Front Office

SAVE THE DATE!

Ray High Choir Concert Thursday, December 9

Plan to be in the Sanctuary with family members, friends, and neighbors for a performance of seasonal music (both religious and secular) at 11:45 a.m., Thursday, December 9. Director Kim Bryce will accompany about 50 Choir students from W. B. Ray High School for a 30-40 minute concert. The students will present their free Winter Concert at 7 p.m. that same evening in the Sanctuary, with their families and classmates in attendance. The free performance also is open to the public.

St. John's UMC will host a 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.

**artwork,
musical
note**

Leadership Board To Meet on Tuesday, Dec. 14

(put meeting details here....)

Ministry Teams. Engaging every member in a ministry team is crucial! Some teams that are already active are Building and Grounds teams, Kitchen, Hospitality & Bereavement, Pumpkin Patch, Offering Counters, and Worship. Other teams needed are Mission & Outreach, Scholarship, Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, and others that might address specific needs. Where do you see yourself in chairing or serving on a ministry team?

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 story on Page 1)

Veterans luncheon on Nov. 18

photos to be placed here

Pumpkin Patch Appreciation lunch
photos to be placed here



**Calling Choir Members
and Others Who Love To
Sing!**

“Celestial Voices”

Traditional Music Director Kim Bryce invites all interested singers (choir members and all who love to sing!) to meet him in the Sanctuary at 8:30 a.m. every Sunday to review hymns and practice music to be sung during worship. Call Kim at 361-834-7713 if you have questions.

The Celestial Bells bell choir meets for practice every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Your Tithes & Offerings

Support Ministries

If you made a pledge for 2021, please stay current if possible. And as Fall and Winter move into a new year, we all are encouraged to keep up with our tithes and offerings.

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 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.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS.



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 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. aThe 43 pledges represent a giving total of \$143,090.

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 paid. Pastor Wade Lindstrom said 41% of the assigned total of \$xxxxas been remitted toward Apportionments.

Sincere thanks to all who participated in this special offering. (See related story on Page 2 of the Pastor's Message which designates gifts to the Christmas Offering will also go towards Apportionments.

Seekers Class Resumes Progressive Dinner

The Seekers Sunday School Class enjoyed 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.

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 the Bunk Estate. (See story on Page 4.)

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 31st (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

St. John's United Methodist Men



**164 Pies Purchased
To Support United Methodist Men Missional Giving**

**Special Fellowship/Election of Officers/Planning
Meet on Wednesday evening, Dec. 8, at 6:30 p.m. in
Fellowship Hall.**

Wednesday Morning Breakfast

Please join us for breakfast every Wednesday morning at 7 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your own breakfast/coffee and be blessed with fellowship and a short devotional.

UMM Card Ministry

Know anyone needing a word of encouragement, a get-well message, a congratulatory note, happy birthday wishes? The United Methodist Men will send a greeting card expressing appropriate sentiments, and all for free! Access the SJUMC website and fill out the form. Gary Schwartz, Secretary, handles all correspondence.

2021 officers are Robert Garza, President; Darron Bergstrom, Treasurer;
Jim Falwell, Vice President; and Gary Schwartz, Secretary
<https://www.sjmethodist.com/umm-card-request/>

**Need approval from Pastor Wade to
announce this: SAVE THE DATE:
5th Sunday Fellowship Suppers To
Tentatively Resume Sunday, January
30, 5:30 p.m. in CLB?**



St. John's United Methodist Women Set January Meeting To Plan for 2022

Chris to write update on Nov. 10 meeting and collection for World Thank offering.

Also mention January meeting to be set soon---budget, election of officers, fundraising discussion for 2022 mission gifts, etc. Members and friends of St. John's UMW (United Methodist Women) unit will meet on Wednesday, November 10, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Community Life Building. The purpose? To regroup following a 20-month hiatus because of the pandemic, enjoy fellowship a

If you are interested in participating in the UMW meeting on November 10, please let Chris Garcia know by text or call to 361-244-4193 or by email to garciachris1714@gmail.com. All are cordially invited!

2022 UMW Assembly Scheduled in Florida

With a "Turn It Up" theme, the United Methodist Women Assembly planning process is underway. Scheduled Friday-Sunday, May 20-22, 2022, in Orlando, Florida, the Assembly will include workshops, business sessions, and keynote speakers. Registration will include in-person as well as virtual options.

FMI: 1-800-850-7928



Carol Salsberry visits with small group that attended Nov. 10 meeting.

Chris to Add more text here about UMW

Reminder

Chris needs to fill this area with text
---Sunday combined worship services on Dec. 26
and January 2? need locations, confirmation of 10 a.m. both days.

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.



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 Contempo-
rary 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 Decem-
ber)

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



Email: st.johnsumccc@gmail.com
Web: www.sjmethodist.com
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SJUMC
Twitter: https://twitter.com/stjohnmethodist
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/sjmethodist/

