

St. John's UMC

focus

Love God. Love Others.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | JANUARY 2018 – VOLUME 1

New Year, New Beginnings

by Michelle Cousineau

It is 2018 and it is a new year with new possibilities and new beginnings. As we begin the New Year there are always things we want to improve from the year before. Sometimes we just want to move on and not look back on the old year. We make New Year's resolutions, and probably break them a week into the New Year.

For me, the New Year is about improving on what I did last year and learning from the mistakes I may have made. That is precisely what I am doing with the newly formatted newsletter you see in front of you.

While the old newsletter was filled with all of the where, who, and what of church life, it did not give you any informative information for you to use. Well, that is changing as of now. We

will still let you know about who, what, and where with the "Church Events" on the front page and the "Announcements" on the back page, but we will be giving you more stories, information on the why and how, and educational articles of things you may not have known. Sometimes the articles will come from us and other times it will be something someone found and they want to share with you.

I hope you will enjoy this new format. You will still be able to get all of the who, what, and where through the website and the weekly digital newsletters, but I hope to give you things you actually want to read and not just a whole lot of dates and times I have already given you in other places.

Grace and Blessings to you all!

New Look for Bulletins

by Christine Studebaker

You might have noticed that our bulletins look a little bit different recently. Copy costs are one area of our budget that we have consistently been exceeding. Our copy lease is set up in a way that St. John's is responsible for paying for the paper, a monthly lease, and then a small charge per page. The charge per page for color is exponentially higher than black and white, so by switching to a smaller black and white bulletin we are able to save over \$3,000 in the next year. You can still look forward to large color bulletins for special events and holidays!

Church Events

For a complete listing of our events go to <http://www.stjohnsumc.cc/calendar>

- Jan 1st & 2nd - Church Office Closed
- Jan 10th – Wednesday Night Programs Resume
- Jan 14th - Human Relations Day Offering
- Jan 14th - Hake 50th Anniversary Party
- Jan 15th - Church Office Closed
- Jan 16th – UMW Berquist/Carlson Circle Meeting
- Jan 17th - Worship Committee Meeting
- Jan 29th - Single Board Meeting

So What? What's Next?

by Rev. Darren Walker

One of the most important things I learned in seminary was to ask the question, "So, what?" After I wrote a sermon, before I preached it, I was taught to ask that question. If I could not give a good answer, I was told to go back and work on my sermon some more. It's a great question and has helped me set priorities in other areas of my life.

Twenty years later, a very wise man gave me the next part of that question. After asking "So, what?" the next

question is "What's next?" This question is important because it keeps the momentum going. Have you ever worked really hard for something, achieved your goal and then were at a loss to know what to do? Asking "What's next?" has helped me to keep going and doing by looking ahead and anticipating.

St. John's has been around for over one hundred and thirty five years. How would you answer the "So, what?" question? We are at the start

of a new year. How would you answer the "What next?" question for our church?

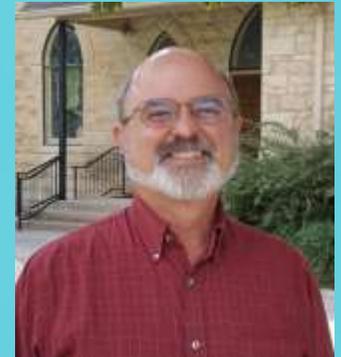
I believe God has plans for this church family. It is important we expect God to be doing good things through us. This is an exciting time for our church family as we continue to grow and serve, loving God and loving others.

Grace and Peace,

Darren Walker

Jeremiah 29:11

"I know the plans I have in mind for you, declares the Lord; they are plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope."



Why We Keep Records

Record/Attendance Keeping is a requirement of the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church

by Christine Studebaker

We need to keep track of people because they are citizens of God's kingdom. Led by the Holy Spirit, Christian life progresses through stages of faith. These stages are often reflected in the records that the community of faith keeps. The church has the privilege of preserving, sharing and utilizing the records of God's people while maintaining contact with its members and encouraging them to be responsible participants in the ongoing life of the church.

An important task of the church is the serious discipline of caring for and sustaining the vital relationships among the people of God. Records are means to remember, empower and stimulate personal belief in Christ.

Please help us by recording your attendance in all church activities and reporting to the church office on a weekly basis.

The Cost of Coffee Time

by Christine Studebaker

Did you know that it cost an average of \$140 per month for our Sunday morning Coffee supplies and services? This is only .70 cents per cup of coffee if 200 cups are poured in a month.

We do not have to pay a rental fee nor do we pay for any repairs needed for the coffee percolator device. We do pay for the convenience of having Community Coffee check and replenish our coffee supplies on a regular basis.

The benefit of having this program is coffee is instantly made compared to the old way taking 20 to 30 minutes to percolate in the huge urns.

Community Coffee service is easy, quick and self-serving.

Church Under the Bridge

Sunday, December 17, 2017, 30 people went to Church Under the Bridge in Austin, TX to minister to about 400 homeless people. We gave out 200 hamburgers with fixings, 100 hot dogs, 5 gallons of coffee, many bags of men's and women's clothes, blankets, scarves, hats, and blinking Christmas necklaces. We also gave out over 80 wrapped presents to the parents and grandparents that needed presents for their little ones.

The people in Austin were so appreciative of the work and ministry that we as a church family did for them. There were hugs given, God Bless You was said to many of us, and prayers said for any who asked. It was not just the homeless that were blessed this day, those of us who are a part of this ministry were blessed as well.

For our next trip we will need sleeping bags and blankets, along with any other warm weather gear.

We will be going again soon if you want to join us. Be on the lookout for our 2018 dates.



Congregational Care

by Carolyn Henry

I recently heard a radio interview of Dan Buettner, author of "Blue Zones of Happiness" A number of "blue zones" have been identified in various parts of the world. Not only do folks who inhabit the "blue zones" have a 10 – 12 year longer life expectancy than the average American, they remain healthy and productive for a much longer span, even into their late 90's and 100's. Along with advice such as "move naturally," the "80/20 rule (eat only until your stomach is 80% full)", and being part of a "tribe" (a church congregation counts as a "tribe") two things the author said stood out to me. The happiest people watch 1 hour or less of television per day, and they engage in some sort of social interaction at least 6 hours/day.

I started thinking about many of the "Friends by Faith" folks that I know. Some may go several days with little to no social interaction, and to fill the empty time, may watch television for the biggest part of the day. For folks like these, very simple things make a big difference. A card, a phone call, a visit (even if short) can make a tremendous difference. Many of St. John's congregation is already engaging in these type activities. And it has been making a big difference. A big Thank You to all those who visit, take communion, provide rides to church events or doctors offices, take someone to the public library, bring little gifts and generally let our home bound folks know they are still very much a part of St. John's "tribe". It is truly a blessing to serve in this way. May 2018 bring even more of these blessings!

Family Ministry

by Kathryn Glover

*"But if it seems wrong in your opinion to serve the Lord, then choose this day whom you will serve. Choose the gods whom your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live. But my family and I will serve the Lord."
Joshua 24:15 CEB*

Here we are again at the beginning of a new year. It's a time of fresh starts and, of course, resolutions.

Most of our New Year's resolutions center on breaking old, bad habits or creating new, healthier ones. This year, why not make a family resolution to serve the Lord by serving others? There are many opportunities in Williamson County to volunteer your time and energy such as the Caring Place, the animal shelter or maybe an elderly person who needs help. Be creative!

Whatever you choose, I encourage everyone to give action to Joshua's words and serve the Lord by loving and serving others.



A Hurricane Harvey Recovery VIM Mission trip is being planned for March 12-16 (during Spring Break) in Rockport, Texas. Initial meeting is on Tuesday, January 9 from 6-7 pm in room 307 at First UMC. If interested, please attend. Adults, families, and college students are all welcome. Youth are welcome as long as accompanied by an adult. No special training is required for this trip.

UMW Ministry

by Amy Robbins

10th Annual UMW Epiphany Brunch
Saturday, January 13, 2018
9:30 am to 12:00 pm
Family Life and Worship Center First United
Methodist Church Temple
Program
"A New Day"
Speaker: Rev. Brad Brittain South District
Superintendent

Admission and Child Care are Free Reservations requested by January 5, 2018 to either: Jacque Watson (254) 774-9824 kwatson5@hotmail.com Ilene Miller (254) 778-4369 mmiller007@hotmail.com

Sales Tables benefiting our Human Trafficking Awareness projects will be available with many items to purchase.

Epiphany Brunch is prepared and provided by United Methodist Women of FUMC Temple as a Gift for the beginning of a new year.

St. John's UMW
Bergquist/Carlson Circle Meeting
Tuesday, January 16 @ 2:00 P.M.
Fellowship Hall
Program: "Sacred Spaces of Call"
By Shirley Channell

For more information contact, UMW Co-Presidents:
Shirley Channell @ skdr50@suddenlink.net
OR
Patty Lee @ plree@suddenlink.net

Announcements

- The Church office will be closed on Monday, January 1st, Tuesday, January 2nd, and Monday, January 15th.
- Jeff and I would like to thank everyone who came out to help with the parking lot fundraiser during the Christmas Stroll on December 1st and 2nd. With your help we raised \$1,620.00 for the capital improvements fund. Be on the lookout during Red Poppy Fest time, as we will be doing another parking lot fundraiser for capital improvements and we will need your help once more. Thank you again!
- Per our Property Manager, there is no food or drinks allowed in the sanctuary. If you have any questions, please contact Johnnie Kovar at johnnie@stjohnsumc.cc. Thank you for your cooperation.
- The Wesley Value Meal is held every Wednesday evening from 5:15 PM to 7:00 PM. A menu will be sent out by e-mail each week and listed in the weekly announcements shown before church begins and in the Fellowship Hall.



A Prayer Team Note

by Martha Arizpe

Another year is upon, with possibilities and dreams just waiting to come to fruition. For some folks, those dreams include a New Year's Resolution. This practice has come to have a "bad rap", as they say, since the news tells us that many people never actually achieve their resolutions. Do not let this negativity discourage you, for, in my humble opinion, the important thing is that you noticed something in yourself that needed improving. You recognized it, you claimed it, and you tried. Actually achieving your

stated goal may be more of an on-going process - reading Scripture more, watching your diet (not every time you eat out is "special"), smiling more and whining less, developing more compassion, giving others the benefit of the doubt, etc. Try always to encourage one another - you may never know what your little positive comment may mean to someone who is struggling. And, in all things, give thanks to God, Who has given you yet another opportunity to improve yourself. Try not to blow it.

Our Prayer Team works hard every week, praying for every single prayer that comes to their attention. We have a strong prayer team led by Martha Arizpe who do an incredible job of keeping track of everyone who needs prayers or has blessings. If you would like our prayer team to pray for you or want to let them know about a blessing in your life, e-mail prayerteam@stjohnsumc.cc. To see a complete list of our prayer requests and blessings, go to <http://www.stjohnsumc.cc/prayerlist>.

DISTRICT EVENTS

The following Lay Servant/Speaker/Minister courses are being offered in the New Year. Please go online to register. Anyone may take the courses, but if you have not had the BASIC Lay Servant course, then credit for the course will not be given toward Lay Servant Certification until the BASIC course is completed.

Leadership presented by Darlene Alfred at Grace UMC in Copperas Cove, on Feb. 10-11, 2018, Saturday from 8:30 am-4:30 pm and Sunday from 2:30-4:30 pm.

Register at: <https://form.jotform.com/73524439270154>

Online courses available at BeADisciple.com for LSM credit:

Date	Title	
1-17-2018	Congregational Leadership: Pastoral Care	\$49.00
1-22-2018	Teach Adults	\$65.00

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, January 14th at 2:00 PM

The congregation is invited to help Carol and Herb Hake. Celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in the family life Center following the 11:00 A.M. church services, on Sunday, January 14th 2018. Cake and Coffee. No Gifts please.



All Choir Rehearsals will resume on
Wednesday, January 10, 2018
Children's Choir 6:00pm-6:45pm
St. John's Ringers 6:30pm-7:30pm
Chancel Choir 7:00pm-8:30pm