

***A Fellowship of the Believers***

*“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” Acts 2:42-47*



In 1866, our fathers and mothers in faith established a church in Cottleville, Missouri to serve what was then a rural farm community, being led by its founding pastor Rev. Peter Goebel, a minister from Friedens Church of St. Charles. In the early years, the small congregation met in the local school house and in private homes. The beginnings were humble, but the foundation that was laid was solid, enabling the church, Deutsche Evangelische St. Johannes Gemeinde, to faithfully grow in the name of Jesus Christ as it served the people of Cottleville and the surrounding

community. As the families grew, so did the church and its abilities to worship, teach and serve.

In only a few years it became evident to the members of that small congregation that if they were to grow and to sustain a faithful presence in the community, they would need adequate facilities of their own. So it was in the 1870's, relying upon one another and God, the members of St. John's built a House of Worship, a Fellowship Hall, and a parsonage. For almost 90 years those facilities served the congregation well.

The next twenty years were years of both joy and struggle. It became evident that God was calling for something new in the life of St. John's. Rising to the call, this church began to plan to build a better bridge into the future... a bridge strong enough to carry a new generation of Christians. There were successes and there were failures. There were times of celebration and times of mourning. There were times when the future looked bright, and times when it seemed that the doors of St. John's might close forever. But through it all God remained faithful; and the people endured and kept the dream alive, believing that God had some purpose for them still.



In 1980, the St. John's congregation moved from Cottleville to the current site on Wolfrum Road and Hwy 94 in Weldon Spring, renovating the church parsonage that was built there in 1964 and began

## St. John's UCC, St. Charles, MO – 150 Years

worshiping in the basement. The move was not an easy decision, but we knew we had to leave in order to grow and we prayed that the Lord would guide us into the future as a faithful church of Jesus Christ. A few years later additional renovations of that building and the addition of a "temporary" church sanctuary was completed and then in 2001 the congregation moved into a newly built church sanctuary and fellowship hall that is attached to the original "parsonage", where we continue to worship today.



Now, some 150 years since the first foundation was laid, St. John's is alive and well. We are a family of faith; one in Christ, continuing to worship and serve as our ancestors did. Together we celebrate and share the love and power of Jesus through our common ministry and mission. We are drawn together to worship and to care for one another. We pray. We Sing. We love. We share our joys and our sorrows, supporting and encouraging one another. We rejoice in the rich and growing diversity of our church family. St. John's continues to be filled with a faithful spirit of praise and gladness. We have taken up where previous generations have left off and we are making a way for more and more people to reach God through Jesus Christ.

St. Johns United Church of Christ is currently served by Pastor Todd Bean, who was installed on January 24, 2016. The Holy Spirit is alive and well here, working in and through this church to provide opportunities for mission, worship, fellowship, stewardship and Christian education. We have received over 20 new members in the past two

months and continue to seek out those who want to join us in fulfilling the mission of Jesus Christ through St. John's. We as a faith community, led by Christ, look forward to what God has in store for us in the future.

We are celebrating our 150th Anniversary with a year-long schedule of activities. In February we honored those who were married in the church with a renewal of vows and reception. A celebration of baptisms was held in April, in which individuals that had been baptized in the church were invited back, along with church members, to reaffirm their baptism during the church service.

Upcoming anniversary events will include a revival picnic on June 26th at Legacy Park in Cottleville, home to our original church. On August 14th we will celebrate pastors who have served the church with a special recognition and luncheon. Past confirmands will be honored on September 18th and on October 23rd we will hold our main anniversary service and celebration, where the Reverend Dr. Ginny Brown Daniel, UCC Conference Minister of the Missouri Mid-South Conference will be preaching at the service. Our final event will be a Decorated Christmas Tree Contest, held during the first 2 weekends of December, where local businesses & St. John's church groups will be invited to decorate & display a Christmas tree in the fellowship hall, with the community voting for their favorite by using canned/boxed food donations (to benefit local food pantry).

