

St John's Chapel UCC in Springfield, Missouri

Celebrating 50 Years

St John's Chapel UCC has a rich German heritage that dates to the German immigrants to Missouri in the 1889's. In 1887, two pastors from St. Peter's Evangelical Church in Billings, MO assembled a group of German Evangelical immigrants to form a German Evangelical Church in Springfield. This congregation would become St. John's Church. In 1934, the German Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church merged to form the Evangelical and Reformed Church. In 1957 the Congregational Christian Churches and the E&R Church merged to form the United Church of Christ. This denomination has historic roots in the Reformation and in the life of a new nation, the United States.

In 1960 the new Board of Homeland Ministries UCC started a church in south Springfield known as the South Fremont UCC. By 1967 the congregation was not successful, St. John's Church was challenged to assume responsibility for the property and congregation, which they did.

The first worship service was held in a farmhouse on the property on August 4, 1968 with over 100 persons attending. Robert Dohm was pastor of St. John's Church and became the first pastor of St. John's Chapel UCC. A formal open house and dedication of St. John's Chapel was held October 6, 1968.

The congregation quickly outgrew the farmhouse, and plans were made to construct the present Fellowship Hall and Church school classrooms. These were dedicated on September 19, 1971. As growth in the congregation continues a Sanctuary to seat 350 was constructed and dedicated on October 14, 1984. In 1986 a trial separation from St. John's UCC began. On December 2, 1990 a mortgage burning ceremony was conducted. In 1993 the Chapel became a separate congregation known as St John's Chapel and was accepted into the Western Association of the Mid-Missouri South Conference in 1994.

The Chapel continued to grow during the 1990's and early 2000's. A ramp was added to make the altar handicapped accessible. A new organ was purchased through the generosity of a Chapel member. The library was moved and expanded. A Labyrinth was built for congregational and public use. Kid's First Pre-School utilizes the classrooms during the week with a very successful faith based educational program.

Our members enjoy traditional activities like the annual sausage supper, Camp Aurora, and the fall bazaar. We have an exceptional music program in our choir and pianist//organist. We have active groups in Women's Guild, Brotherhood, Friendship

Circle, and Koinonias. We continue to participate in mission activities in our local area such as Crosslines, shoes for school children, hygiene kits for hurricane victims, gifts and caroling to nursing home residents,

Pastor's that have served St John's Chapel during the past 50 years are:

Rev. Robert M. Dohm	1968-1982
Rev. Sally Palmer	1979-1981
Rev. Earle Potts	1984-1989
Rev. John E. Masters	1991-2003
Rev. Becky Hebert	2005- 2012
Rev. Sue Williams	2014-present

The Chapel is a friendly, caring congregation open to all. We are visioning to the future to discern what God would have us do as a congregation.

