

Memories of Faith

***A Collection of memories to Celebrate
the 50th Anniversary of Faith UCC
New Braunfels, Texas***



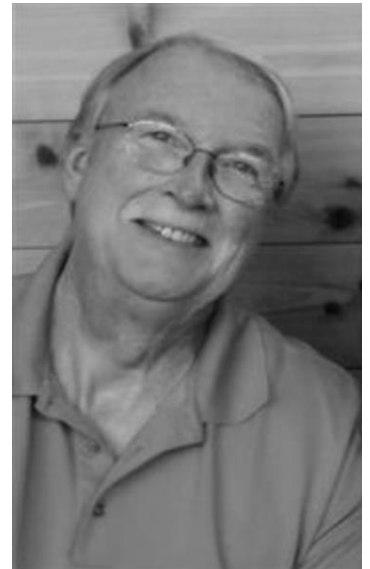
Faith UCC 1966-2016

Don Green



As part of Faith UCC New Braunfels 50th anniversary Don Green interviewed and wrote down some of the memories of some of the members of Faith UCC. Our thanks to Don for gathering these memories.

Pictures in this collection were taken by Mike Ziegler. Our thanks to Mike for taking these photos.



Index

Bennie Harst
Kathy Hoffmann
JoAnne Brown
Kenneth Triesch
Lucile Marburgher Part 1 & Part II
Irene Bartels
Richard Hitz
Rev's Ralph & Sandy Ludwig
Rev. Frank Dietz
Karen Dietz
Al Hennig

Addenda:

Sermon by Rev Ray Bizer give on June 26, 2016
More Memories of Faith Part 1
More Memories of Faith Part 2

Our thanks to all who shared their memories of Faith!

Bennie Harst Remembers

Bennie Harst remembers the day Faith United Church of Christ came into being, Sept. 4, 1966. “We had a special service that day at First Protestant Church, and about twenty people got up and walked out,” he recalls with a twinkle. “No, it wasn’t a protest; it was planned and announced ahead of time. It was symbolic of some of our members becoming the founding members of the new church.”



According to a history, “The First Twenty-Five Years” of Faith Church, the group of 21 adults and nine children signed a register as founding members, but the history does not mention their leaving. They are among the 60 persons listed as charter members.

To help celebrate the 120th anniversary of its beginning in 1965, First Protestant adopted as a mission in 1964 to establish a second United Church of Christ congregation in New Braunfels. However, myriad details took the project well into 1966. Bennie’s boss, Elmo Fischer, who was chairman of the Sponsoring Committee, became a founding member and first moderator of the new congregation. Moreover, that congregation first met in the Friendship Room of Eden Home, of which Fischer was administrator.

Bennie and his wife, Nellie, remained members of First Protestant until that church left the UCC denomination, a move Bennie calls “a surprise”. The Harsts joined Faith Church in 2000. He remembers there being over 200 people on the roll, “But they didn’t all come at once.” Bennie lives in an apartment in the Village at Eden Hill.

Kathy Hoffmann Remembers

Kathy Hoffmann's face lights up when she remembers working with young people of Faith Church in the 1990's. But she turns serious when she talks about a time late in the decade when she played a key role in construction of the building in which the congregation worships in its fiftieth year. She headed up the Building and Expansion Committee.



"I had an office in Baese Hall," she says with justifiable pride. "Three of us were there every day. The other two were Rick Leber and Kermit Baese."

Purchase of the plans, dated April 29, 1998, from Gustav Hele and Associates included no construction supervision by the architects. Faith Church was on its own, and Kathy had experience in the building business. She and the others represented the congregation in day-to-day coordination and decision-making throughout the construction. Filling out the building committee were church members providing support and advice in various fields: Kenneth Triesch, Elmo Fischer, Betty Heinemeyer, Pastor Lee Zillmann, and Tony Marburger, whose wife, Lucile, headed a sub-group for interior finishing.

As for youth activities, Kathy ruffles wistfully through a sizeable collection of photos. "During Pastor Lee Zillman's ministry, around 1991, the Church Education Committee started what was known as the 'Faith Extravaganza'," she recalls. "We had activity time, story time, games, music, and role-playing. On one Saturday each month young people from community churches were invited to a special event. Once there was an elaborate mock wedding." She shows many pictures of young people dressed in obviously borrowed outsized clothing. There was plenty of involvement from the Faith congregation.

"We started with Susan, Melissa, and Sherry Heinemeyer, Kathy Leber, Sharon and Lee Zillmann, with occasional assistance from John McEachern and others," Kathy recalls. "Later we were joined by Karen Kramm and Nancy and Steve Foster.

Through the years there also have been many pool parties for young people at the Hoffmann family compound on FM 482, where Kathy makes her home.

JoAnne Brown Remembers

Jo Ann Brown has vivid memories of the early years following the founding of Faith United Church of Christ in 1966. Still active in the church, she is the only charter member who is still on its rolls.

“We had our ups and downs,” she relates. “Two or three times we voted on whether to disband. I always voted ‘no’, and we kept going.”

The congregation first worshipped in the Friendship Room at Eden Home. Next they held services in the lobby of the Landa Professional Building, where a curved counter served as their altar. “But,” she remembers well, “every Sunday we had to carry all our chairs there from a storage space we had we had on North Walnut near the railroad tracks. We also had a small organ.” Church Hill Middle School off Loop 337 was another early place of worship.

“We didn’t really get going,” Jo Ann says, “until we got our own buildings” (Baese Hall in 1976 and the sanctuary and office structure in 1999. See Kathy Hoffmann item,)

Jo Ann grew up in Faith’s parent church, First Protestant. Married and moved away, the family returned to New Braunfels from Pleasanton in time to join Faith’s list of 60 charter members – Jo Ann, husband Bill, and sons Billie 5, Mark 4, and Steven 17 months. At age 15, Jo Ann had taught in Sunday school at First Protestant with Ruth (Mrs. Elmo) Fischer and Gladys (Mrs. Raymond) Baese, who was superintendent. Years later Jo Ann invited Mrs. Baese to join Faith Church, and ultimately the Baeses became principal donors of land for Faith Church, hence the name Baese Hall.

Jo Ann served on the Church Council in the early 1970’s and remembers that at one time Faith counted more than 200 members, adding, “We had three funeral hospitality committees.” She has lived in her home on River Acres Drive since 1972.

Kenneth Triesch Remembers

Kenneth Triesch, reflecting on more than 70 years as a church organist, concludes succinctly, "I was happiest when I had choirs." His daughter, Wendy Reinke, agrees: "He could play the organ with his hands and feet while singing bass and directing a choir with his head . It was like watching a machine!"

Ken served Faith Church as volunteer organist for 18 years before retiring in 2014. The congregation honored him on March 4, 2012, for his long service as a church musician. Ken rewarded them by playing a mini-concert on the church organ that bears his name. He calls the dedication of that organ a high point in his career. A plaque on the organ reads:

1999

This Allen Renaissance organ given in memory of Jim Gilbert by his wife Norma and family and in honor of Kenneth Triesch , organist at Faith Church, by his family

(Norma Gilbert served as church secretary for many years.)

Ken first sang for a wedding at age 5, for which daughter Wendy relates, "He received one sheep." His keyboard career took off when he became music director of Faith's parent church, First Protestant, at age 17. In his 19 years there he played organ and directed adult choirs singing in English and German as well as separate boys' and girls' choirs. He went on to teach music in public schools in McAllen and serve congregations there before returning to New Braunfels.

At Faith's 50-year mark Ken lives in the "Bluebonnet" nursing care unit at Eden Hill Communities, the UCC-affiliated eldercare complex then called Eden Home, of which he was chief executive from 1969 until retiring in 1989. Ken had succeeded Faith founding member Elmo Fischer in that position . (Another Faith member, Bennie Harst, served as assistant to each man.)

Lucile Marburger Remembers

Memories at my age. It is hard to start at 50 years ago for Faith Church. We were not living in New Braunfels but would attend a service or so when visiting my parents in New Braunfels. I remember one service in the Landa Plaza Mall on Walnut and Landa with Rev. Paul Mohr as pastor. But our move to Fischer, Texas, (1984) found us attending church in the Valley at Canyon Lake as nearest church and becoming active associate members until we met Norma (Faith secretary) and Jim Gilbert (Slumber Falls Camp volunteer) living at Canyon Lake who invited us to Faith.



We made a complete transfer from St. Paul's Church (Houston) in the early 1990s to Faith Church meeting in Baese Hall with Rev. Lee Zillmann as pastor. E.D. "Tony" Marburger and I became involved in Men's Brotherhood, Circle of Faith, and all activities – work and social. Tony served on council and I in various circle positions and on committees including the building of the sanctuary. In the 1990s, we had a few young families so family type gatherings like pool parties at the Hoffmans and an annual summer service with meal at the Gilbert's community clubhouse and pool overlooking Canyon Lake were enjoyed by young and old.

I also recall some Fall hayrides at the Pantermuehl Ranch. With these events, a close member relationship grew. Occasionally, I had luncheons for Circle of Faith which included men. Another home gathering was an Advent service with neighbors invited. I am not remembering weddings or specific christenings but a special full house memorial service for my husband, Tony, in 2007 is to be remembered. From my christening (98 years ago) and wedding in St. Peter's E&R Coupland) 1943, I have gone with the many changes in our denomination. Faith Church is a great example. – Lucile Marburger

Lucile Marburger Remembers: Part II

Lucile Marburger, at 98, preserves as a "Faith at 50" memento the logo of the Church Women's Fellowship from the 1980's--90's. Inscribed around a circle are the words "Circle of Faith, Love, and Service, and inside is a large image of a butterfly, symbol of many happy times.

"We had charge of the kitchen and furnished Communion," she reminisces. "We visited residents at Eden Home, had socials, and put on meals." An annual luncheon for winter Texans was one of the latter, and interstate friendships developed. . "One summer my family visited people named Janckeat a UCC retirement campus in Wisconsin," she recalls. There also was local interaction with Methodist, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic churches through Church Women United.



Lucile served terms as secretary and as president of Faith Women's Fellowship. Of course the group met in Baese Hall. When the time came to plan the larger sanctuary and office structure, Lucile and (late) husband Tony served on building committees. He was on the Building and Expansion Committee, and her job was the Interior Planning Committee, with Norma Gilbert, Dorothy Rest, Kermit Baese, Betty Heinemeyer, Rev. Lee Zillmann, and Kathy Hoffmann. They came up with detailed finishing specifications for everything from ceiling beams to bathroom floors.

Tony Marburger also served on the Church Council and the Building and Campaign committees, and the couple volunteered at the SOS Food Bank. Moving to the New Braunfels area in 1984, they had a house built on Mail Route Road near Fischer. Their son, Alan, the architect who designed the home, came to live with Lucile there five years ago and is a member of Faith Church.

Irene Bartels Remembers

Irene Bartels counts women's sewing projects and children of the congregation as particular sources of joy in her 14-plus years as a member of Faith United Church of Christ. "One time a group with Judy Anderson and others got together and made some sort of bags, and I enjoyed that so much," she recalls. "That was the best thing!" Irene likes to do "yo-yo" quilting, which involves circular pleated cloth elements the size of the children's string toy. She especially likes to see quilts decorating the Narthex walls.

Irene looks forward to children's time in Sunday morning worship. "I've watched every one of those (6) Perry-Clark kids grow up, and it's wonderful. I adore those children....I enjoy the Passing of the Peace during morning worship, and I miss Ken Triesch on the organ."

At age 93 she has lived in her home on Kessler Street for the past 69 years. She and (late) husband Barney married in Seguin and lived in Clear Spring before moving to New Braunfels. She taught Sunday School at Faith's parent First Protestant Church before joining Faith March 17, 2002.

Richard Hitz Remembers

Richard Hitz calls up a mental picture of Don Gregg (1923-2016) perched on the roof of a house at Eden Home that Faith Church members helped renovate. The Rev. Peter Olsen led several such volunteer projects wherever there was a need, Richard remembers.

Richard served on the search committee that called the Rev. Scott Martin to become pastor of Faith in November 2005. "We interviewed only three or four prospects before voting to call Scott," he recalls. Richard and Bennie Harst took care of the church grounds back then.

In "about 1995" Richard came to Faith from its parent First Protestant Church. He has served on the boards of both churches as well as on the Board of Directors of Eden Home Inc., now Eden Hill Communities from 2000 to 2008 as secretary and Executive Committee member. He and his wife, Joy, have lived in the Pinnacle at Eden Hill since it opened in 2013.

Rev's Ralph & Sandy Ludwig Remember

Our most memorable time of ministry at Faith Church... It all began as a quiet midweek day around Sept 1st or 2nd 2005, at the office of Faith church. The summer was drawing to a close and we were beginning to get ready for the new school year. Labor Day was just around the corner, when the office phone rings and Charles Stark, the Camp Director at Slumber Falls Camp, calls to inform me that Slumber Falls Camp has just agreed to accept families from the hurricane Katrina storm that was ravaging the coast line of New Orleans.



Sandy and I, like the rest of the nation, had been watching the news and of course we knew about the storm, but at the time it seemed far away. That phone call brought it into our front doors. Suddenly we were not just spectators; we were now dispensers of emergency housing for 80 desperate men women and children. They spanned the whole age spectrum from infants to grandparents that could only walk with the aid of walkers and they were all Afro-Americans.

Charles asked us, "Could Faith Church help?" Of course we could and did. For the next month, we spent most of our working hours at Slumber Falls Camp, helping evacuees with whatever they needed.

Slumber Falls fortunately had just ended its summer camping season and so the facility had room. We were uncertain at first how many were coming, but we wound up with 80. These were folk who came with only what they had on their backs and could cram into a couple of suitcases. They had just lost everything and we were having to supply what we could to help them. What was most heartening to witness was how the New Braunfels community, and especially the New Braunfels churches, rallied to provide an outpouring of love, by way of food, clothing, toiletries, toys, spare televisions and you name it. It was far beyond our expectations.

We needed a distribution point from which we could gather, sort, and distribute the donations that were being offered to these needy folk. The Red Lobster antique store/restaurant offered us a large room as a distribution center. Sandy took part in working with the many gifts of clothes that were donated by the caring people from the community and churches. Many of the clothes were brand new, with price tags still on them. We wound up have literally mountains of clothing, and what was not needed by our evacuees was donated to local charities. It was a lot of sorting and lifting and transporting but we got it done.

Our own Charles Stark and his staff were amazing, as they reached out to numerous contacts, and made things happen. Internet connections, FEMA contacts, emergency aid and yes even congressmen were contacted and came. Prescriptions needed to be filled, doctor and dentist appointments had to be made, as well as the transportation to and from many of these commitments. We all pitched in and did what was needed.

But of all the things that we were able to provide, the single thing that mattered most was that by the grace of God, we **were able to provide hope** to 80 people who came to us feeling hopeless. They came into our camp having lost everything, out of touch with friends and neighbors, feeling like complete strangers in an almost all white community, and they left feeling like they were people who were loved and cared about.

It was a joyous Sunday morning indeed, when many of them came to Faith Church to worship and thank the congregation and thank God for what had been done for them. As one women said to me as they were leaving, ***“Thank you all for showing us all that love knows no color” Faith church can be proud of the roll they played in this community effort. Well done thou good and faithful servant.”***

Revs. Ralph and Sandy Ludwig

Rev. Al Hennig Remembers

The Rev. Albert Hennig readily counts as his most vivid memory from 25 years as a member of Faith Church the Sunday that a squirrel showed up for morning worship.

“He ran right up the center aisle,” Al recalls, to put the story in a nutshell, so to speak. It happened some time in 2007 or 2008, and those who were in the congregation that day remember slightly varying details.



Ken Triesch had finished the organ prelude and Pastor Scott Martin had just begun the morning announcements when the animal ran out from somewhere behind the lectern and made a dash for the narthex. Scott immediately strode down from the pulpit as Mr./Ms. Squirrel repeatedly leaped against the closed glass doors. Someone in the narthex, probably a quick-thinking usher, closed the office doors there and opened the double doors to the parking lot. With the critter now frantically running back and forth behind the last row of parishioners, Scott opened the glass doors and the animal left the sanctuary. After a few fast laps in the narthex he/she was ushered outside to freedom.

Amid laughter the pastor returned to the pulpit and, as accounts vary, may or may not have said “Now where was I?” Scott recalls that the squirrel apparently had become trapped in the building during the week, when an opening near the eaves had been sealed.

Rev. Hennig retired in 1990, ending a ministry at the UCC church in Washington on the Brazos. He and his wife, Betty, moved to New Braunfels and joined Faith Church on Jan. 21, 1991. Along with its 50th, he celebrates the 60th anniversary of his ordination into the ministry. Al is a resident in assisted living at EdenHill.

Rev. Frank Dietz Remembers

As we retired to the greater New Braunfels community on "the back end" of the Twin Oaks Pantermuehl Ranch and built a serviceable contemporary barn "haus", Karen and I began to look for a faith family with whom we might connect. There were "natural" communion and family ties at modest Faith Church along with a number of folks we have known though the years. Beyond the warmth of welcome we experienced immediately and the support our "refugee grandchildren" received after evacuating Katrina ravaged New Orleans, we discovered a congregation with a strong will to connect with its community and the challenging population surrounding.

Uppermost for me was a church that would not be struggling about its United Church of Christ ethos but celebrating what that means. Too, there was a willingness to move to become an "Open and Affirming" expression of the UCC. The strong commitments to our UCC and ecumenical and interfaith expressions helped "seal the deal" for making a decision for the covenant of membership with Faith UCC.



We affirm the faith family and its myriad of diverse partnerships inside the congregation and into the community at large! I say a prayer of thanksgiving that we have such a church fitting our needs and passions so nearby! Thanks be to God!

Karen Dietz Remembers

Although Frank and I worshipped at Faith Church on many occasions when we visited family in New Braunfels, it wasn't until we retired in late 2005 that we decided to join Faith UCC. We found ourselves feeling quite "at home" worshipping with family, friends, and new acquaintances. To our delight, a pastor friend from Kansas turned out to be our new pastor/teacher: Scott Martin.

We have been privileged to be part of many treasured moments here at Faith. We attended and/ or participated in those important and precious milestones as members joined us in family baptisms, weddings, and the memorial services for both parents, Roland and later, Julia Pantermuehl. Our wider family members and friends are welcomed whenever they are able to worship with us from places near and far. We have been grateful for the opportunity over the years to participate in the many community gatherings whose members are welcomed to use our facilities: clergy study groups, garden club meetings, Family Promise Board, CASE, Church Women United, Association meetings and more.

Faith Church has made possible meaningful opportunities for volunteer service both within and beyond the walls of our buildings and for that I remain most thankful. The richness of those experiences has been a gift. Sharing in fellowship and service with fellow members has been a joy and often, just lots of fun! The witness of both new and long time members (and those in the great cloud of witnesses) continues to be a personal example of faithfulness for which both Frank and I thank God.

Addendum: Rev. Raymond Bizer Sermon (June 6, 2016)

(This was taken from Rev Bizer's sermon notes. Rev. Bizer is Pastor Emeritus.)

A number of years ago my wife and I took a trip to the Boston area where our son and wife and family lived in the suburbs. While there we did a little sight-seeing in the area that is filled with a lot of history. We visited the homes of two presidents and a lot of historical sights related to the beginning of our nation's history. And there was a lot of history related to the UCC - Plymouth Rock and Plymouth Plantation, etc. We enjoyed getting in touch with a little of our national history and church history.

There is something rather important in making a connection with a little of our history, with the church, with our family. Connectedness is important, with our nation, with family and more. so, during this year, as we celebrate our 50th year, we take a look at where we have been so that we can know a bit as to where we might go.

Have you ever thought about our faith as Christians, how much we are all so "future orientated"? The biblical story is a road to travel on the "way"? The story of Moses leading the Children of Israel out of slavery to the Promised Land, or how Joshua led them over the Jordan River, or how Jesus called the disciples and said "go" or how he set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem, or how Saul on the road to Damascus saw a vision that changed the course of his life. And there is so much more!!

Many years ago as part of my ministry I recall a speaker telling us to project into the future and said "you begin with what has been." Let's look back to a portion of our history at Faith Church.

It was the year 1978 that Faith Church arrived at a point of decision --- to close its doors or take a bold new step. It was then that Rollin Russell, associate conference minister, came up with a plan: FAITH Church leaders felt the need of having someone serve the church who lived in the community (for a number of years Faith Church was served by a part-time pastor who lived in San Antonio) and Slumber Falls Camp and Retreat Center was served by volunteers for the summer program with a property manager living on the property. Rollin Russell's proposal called for a person to be called as Pastor of Faith Church who also would serve as the program director at Slumber Falls Camp. I had served the Missouri Conference for some 18 years and

was ready to make a change. Negotiations began and so on a cold winter day with two feet of snow on the ground in January 1979 we left Missouri to arrive in New Braunfels to live at 1204 E. Common, thanks to Raymond Baese, a contractor and member of Faith Church, who had just completed the building of our new home.

My first Sunday as pastor at Faith Church was the last Sunday of January 1979. Along with getting acquainted with Faith Church, I was immediately put into the role of developing the summer program for 1979 at Slumber Falls Camp. This meant recruiting leadership (some had already been committed), developing the program, providing publicity, and promoting participation, etc. With a lot of hard work in those early months we were able to help provide programming for eight camps.

In the meantime Faith Church had recently been using its new fellowship hall on a lot given to Faith Church. New Braunfels was a small city of 17,000. East Common Street stopped at Loop 337. On the opposite side of East Common on the lot Rudy's Barbecue now stands on, stood a boarded up building known as the Crystal Chandelier. A former dance hall, it was boarded up and had not used for many years.

Raymond and Gladys Baese, members of Faith Church and developers of the Rivercrest Area of New Braunfels, offered a lot to build a fellowship hall on at the end of East Common at Loop 337, to serve as a fellowship hall and place of worship, and office. This was all in place when we arrived.

We had come to Faith Church and New Braunfels and pledged to work up to five years to help both Faith Church and Slumber Falls Camp to arrive at a point where each could move on to self support. Attendance at Faith Church was in the neighborhood of 15-20 with about 50 members. Temporary support was given from the South Central Conference as this joint venture was taking place. So we began a ministry that lasted to the end of 1985 at Faith Church and 1986 at Slumber Falls Camp.

Reflections on those nearly 7 Years: Attendance grew to an average of about 55. East Common was extended and began to develop. We were able to establish a presence in the community.

Seeing a need to provide some activities during the summer months we provided a week-day program of activities for children once a week with the help of Sue Taylor, Cheryl Greer, and Kathy Hoffmann. Bringing together some 10 to 20 children each Thursday evening during the summer months.

Because of Emma Lou's interest in working with children and with the mentally handicapped, she immediately volunteered with MHMR of Comal County. And as a result of her abilities in working with children she was offered the position of developing a program of therapy for developmentally delayed infants and toddlers by the State of Texas. In its beginning Faith Church opened the doors of the fellowship hall for the program until it outgrew our facilities. Doctor's referrals continue and it is now known as Homespun.

A confirmation class led to the development of a fellowship program on Sunday evenings, until jobs and further school brought it to an end. A mission fair was developed on one occasion to highlight the church's world mission work when we brought together mementos from world travel by members which filled the entire fellowship hall. Bethany Church in San Antonio was being developed as a new church start and we established a relationship with the congregation by inviting them to come to Faith Church for a Sunday evening pot-luck with a special program. It was a special program for Faith Church.

An Easter Sunrise service was established with breakfast at Slumber Falls. To enhance our worship service three memorial gifts came into existence --- the pulpit and lectern and baptismal font were created. A bell tower with bell was installed. It was moved to Slumber Falls Camp when our new Church sanctuary was built. Music was an important part of our worship - with piano, organ, hymn sings and special music. On occasion Slumber Falls staff provided music. The Women's Fellowship was active and engaged in various projects to help Eden Home and other agencies.

What would you like to write about the Faith Church story in five or ten or twenty-five years?
What is your vision?

More Memories of Faith From Church Members

Valerie Oates (joined the church June 2016)

I remember the first time I came to the church, Carol & Eddie Martinez introduced themselves and made me feel a part right off - The next Sunday, Luke made a point to tell me, "welcome back, so glad to see you" as did Helen and Mike - then the next time, Sheila, Mary, Don.... The list continues - then I mentioned to Janet Sherman that I really loved here car magnet with UCC

on it. She took it off her car and gave it to me. Then Bob Manning, Wil and Hulen welcomed my son as part of the group when working together at Habitat. My point - there is not a church more welcoming than Faith!

"They loved me before they knew me."



Wilmer Brown (joined the church December 2013)

My greatest memory is the spirit of this congregation regarding missions. This and the accepting of others no matter who we are. A funny thing I always remember to this day is Pastor Scott's humor. He laughs at his own jokes.

Joseph Guerrero & Reed Hoke (joined the church
(joined the church December 2013)

I remember our wedding. Proud to be the first gay wedding. I remember when Reed and I baptized Penelope. Together as husbands we stood welcoming our God daughter to the family of God.



Shirley Manning (joined the church March 2014)

One of the first Sundays that we visited Faith UCC before moving here was when Charles Stark led the service that Sunday and presented the camping program at Slumber Falls. He asked us to team up with another person and share an experience of our church camping days. I teamed up with Jim Gossett and told him of my remembrance of camp in western New York and he told me they had lived in the Buffalo area where Chrissy did some of her training. It was wonderful to get to know the Gossett family.



Helen Boursier (joined the church June 2016)

I remember when I got stung by a red wasp while hosting a church pool party! A church member who inspired me was the many people who have so generously stepped up to help with the prep work for Art Inside Karnes.

The Sunday prayer time is very meaningful to me.

Emma Lou Bizer (joined the church in 1979)

I joined Faith Church when my husband, Ray, became the pastor.

One of my favorite memories will always be the "Circle of Faith", the women's organization which was an active part of the church for many years - until most of the members were getting older and the young women of the congregation were busy with families and employment outside their homes.

The Circle members joined in the many projects: the church kitchen activities, care of the sanctuary, sewing bibs and lap blankets for Eden Home residents, meeting with women's organizations at neighboring churches and joining them financial aid to Back Bay Mission, Slumber Falls Camp and Eden Home - usually with about \$2,000 a year. We took turns conducting our own monthly programs with occasional speakers. Some of our favorite topics were the World Mission projects of the United Church of Christ. The "Circle of Faith" served as a wonderful way for women to be active in the congregation.

Judy Anderson Remembers

Judy Anderson missed many morning worship services at Faith Church in the 1980s because Sundays found her at her job across the street at the River Crest Drive-In. Yet on 'most any day of the week she was likely to be involved in one of the unsung missions of many churches, helping unfortunate travelers get back on the road. "People who had bad luck along the way would stop at the church asking for money for gas," she recalls. "Rev. (Ray) Bizer



wouldn't give them cash but would send them over to me and then call me with instructions. I'd see that they got what the church could provide and send the travelers on. Rev. Bizer would come over later and pay the bill" - a handy arrangement. The location also made it handy for Judy to take her two daughters to work with her every Sunday and send them across the street for Bible School.

Rev. Bizer married Steve and Judy Anderson in the church in 1985. On June 26, 2016, as part of the Faith at Fifty celebration, the Andersons renewed their vows along with eight other couples, among whom were the Rev. Ray and Emma Lou Bizer.

Judy, who hails from Illinois, began attending Faith Church in 1978 or '79. She has volunteered at the SOS Food Bank and, like Irene Bartels, remembers well the women's and children's projects of making school bags to send to Back Bay Mission -- and thos 'yo-yo' quilts.

Evelyn Krueger Remembers

Evevlyn Krueger joined Faith UCC in 1998 or 1999. She writes: One of my favorite memories of Faith is when my husband Kermit was home-bound with Parkinson's disease and I was his care giver. Pastor Lee Zillmann came at least once a month to visit us and bring communion. That meant a lot to Kermit. As his health was declining, he would still ask in German if it wasn't time for the pastor to come.

Mary Owen Remembers

Mary Owen recalls first attending Faith UCC in June of 2014. Though the sanctuary was small, there were White, Black, Hispanic, men, women, old, young, straight and gay people all worshipping together.

From that alone, I could see that this church not only "talked the talk" but also "walked the walk." The people were warm and friendly, the music lively, the liturgy and sermon thoughtful, the prayer time powerful. The service ended with communion and the rousing song "Alle, Alle, Alleluia."

When I saw the 90+ year old Bizers shaking their rhythm instruments as joyfully as the children across the aisle, I was hooked. I knew I had come home.



Karen Dietz Remembers

The Pantermuehl family's participation in the ministry of Faith Church began when our aunt, Valeska Pantermuehl, responded to Elmo Fischer's request for a few members of First Protestant Church to become "associate members" of the fledgling congregation. She gladly attended the newly formed Faith Church, supporting it financially as she was able during uncertain economic times. Aunt Valeska was an enthusiastic supporter of Church World Service/CROP and One Great Hour of Sharing. Her belief in the need for the new congregation was contagious. When Kathy Pantermuehl Leber and Rick Leber moved to New Braunfels to assist on the family ranch, they, too, became active members of Faith UCC after our aunt returned to the church where she had been baptized and confirmed.



Over the years Kathy and Rick served the new congregation in numerous ways. For some time, Kathy coordinated intergenerational services, incorporating the talents of many of the members. Rick served on the church council as treasurer, and Kathy was church council president when the Rev. Ray Bizer retired as pastor. The couple helped host some Fall Festivals at the Pantermuehl ranch as well as bringing church school youngsters there for Sunday field trips.

Do ask Kathy about her clown ministry at Faith! Rick was a big part of the Men's Brotherhood when it was meeting monthly on Saturday mornings, helping provide delicious breakfasts. He remembers the fun of pushing Sol Fuss down the church aisle one Sunday

morning on the newly purchased riding lawnmower, the acquisition of which was a cause for celebration indeed!

Rick and Kathy continue to be active in the life of the congregation. Kathy can be found in the choir, teaching church school, serving hospitality, and acting as liturgist. She has helped design and create some of our most lovely banners for the sanctuary. Most Sunday mornings will find Rick welcoming members and visitors as they arrive, lending a helping hand whenever needed with yard and building maintenance, assisting with hospitality cleanup, event preparations and more.

Soon after Julia Pantermuehl Allison moved to New Braunfels with her little girl Jennifer, the two became members of Faith Church. After lay liturgists became part of the worship, Julie volunteered and continues to serve in that way. She helps with the church school program and hospitality, and, on several occasions, helped create banners for the sanctuary, most recently the "rainbow" banner during Faith's 50th anniversary year. Julie joins sisters Jan Karen and brother-in-law Mike Ziegler, as a volunteer at SOS Food Bank.

Julie's support of her daughter's involvement in camping and youth activities undergirded Jennifer Marlow's active participation in the Christian Ed program of Faith Church and Jennifer's membership on Slumber Falls Camp Council. Tim and Jennifer Marlow and their three boys are examples of the supportive involvement of young families in the life of the church.



After a ministry in the United Church of Christ and its predecessors, Roland and Julia Pantermuehl, retired to New Braunfels and eventually found their way to Faith UCC. For a number of years they had been members of Faith's parent First Protestant Church, where Roland had been baptized, confirmed, and ordained. As forbearers of an extended family of Faith that would grow to 20 persons, they spent the remainder of their years as active, participating, and supportive members.



Having attended Faith Church for many years with his parents, Roland "Tex" Pantermuehl recently joined the congregation with Jill Mata. Tex has helped with the design of the church directory in the past using his skills as a graphic artist with the Texas Historical Commission in Austin. He can be found helping with hospitality, cleaning up and elsewhere. He was a major contributor in the design of the memorial services for both parents held at Faith Church in recent years.



Janice Pantermuehl Ziegler and Mike Ziegler moved to New Braunfels in 2015 and immediately became active, contributing members of Faith Church. Our congregation is fortunate to have this couple in our midst. Some examples of Jan's love of hospitality and party planning have already been revealed in the hosting of our women friends from Friedens UCC and the reception following the wedding vow renewal service this summer. Both Jan and Mike are avid supporters of the LEAP adult literacy program. Mike employs his photography skills in helping produce an updated Faith Church directory. Mike and Jan come to our congregation after years of involved membership in their socially active Presbyterian congregation in Austin.

by Karen Pantermuehl Dietz