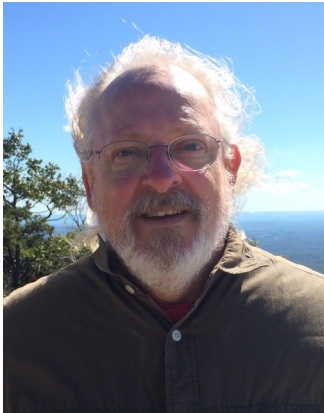


SENIOR *Spotlight*

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## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR DIRECTOR

*"Hello!" from Our New Pastor*

Dear friends,

I know like me you are wanting to know more about our new pastor, Rev. Joe Stobaugh, and his family. And it is so odd to think about getting to know a new pastor when we cannot speak with him or her face-to-face, from 2 feet away, and shake his or her hand. We are ALL wanting this Covid virus required social distancing to be over with as soon as possible! But, perhaps in the meantime, this will help. One of our Lay Leaders, Kim Brannon, recently interviewed Rev. Stobaugh in anticipation of his assuming the pastoral leadership of University Park UMC on July 1. Kim says, "As we spoke, Joe's creativity and passion for worship and the church became very clear. His journey has been one of faithful obedience to the call to ministry God placed on his heart as a young man. His role at UPUMC will be a full expression of the gifts and talents God has equipped him with."

Kim: Joe, tell us about your call to ministry.

Joe: As a lifelong Methodist, I was nurtured and mentored in the faith for much of my childhood. I made an early connection to Plano's Custer Road UMC through music and became active in the youth group. But it was my connection to the Denton Wesley Foundation while studying music at the University of North Texas where I first discerned a call to ministry. In the spring of my freshman year, I began to understand that music would become an important ministry and a conduit to my future as a church leader. In fact, I held my first job in ministry as the Wesley Foundation Music Director during my sophomore year in college! In 1998, at the Explore conference for students considering their call to ministry, I said "yes" to the call God put on my life and joyfully committed myself to pursuing ministry.

Kim: Tell us about your formal religious education.

Joe: After completing my Bachelor of Music degree from the University of North Texas (I studied music education and saxophone), I attended seminary. I graduated in 2003 with a Master of Sacred Music degree

*Interview continued inside*

from the Perkins School of Theology and the Meadows School of the Arts at Southern Methodist University and was ordained in 2007 as a deacon in the United Methodist Church. It has been a joy to serve as a music and worship minister in several Texas cities, creating and building music programs that varied from traditional to contemporary to gospel. At one church, I even created a saxophone choir with the talented lay people there! As I mentioned a minute ago, music has been an important conduit to the preaching, teaching, and leading in the church that God has called me to do.

Kim: What is your favorite part of ministry?

Joe: I would have to say the people and the worship. I've dedicated my life to the worship of God and it's been a joy to experience that with the people I've met along the way. In my last two ministry positions at Argyle UMC and Grace Avenue UMC, the churches were blessed with high levels of growth and I was able to innovate with several styles of music and worship for these blossoming congregations. But music is only one expression of worship and I am also deeply connected to the totality of worship – the liturgy, the sacraments, the preaching. All are a sacred part of my call to ministry. So in early 2020, when Bishop McKee called and asked me to come to University Park UMC as Senior Pastor, I knew God had been preparing me for this move at just this time.

Kim: Tell us about your family?

Joe: My wife, Sarah, and I have been married for 19 years. Sarah also grew up in Plano and is now the Lead Homebound Teacher for Frisco ISD. She is busy with two small businesses as well. We have two amazing kids, Ellie (14) and Sam (11). Ellie is going into 9th grade and plays the bass clarinet. Sam is going into 6th and is starting the bassoon!

Kim: What are your joys outside of work?

Joe: Music, of course! As a family we also enjoy Dallas Stars hockey, traveling (we love the beach but mountains are good, too!), watching movies, riding bikes and camping. Some of our favorite restaurants are Seasons 52, Gloria's, Little Greek, any good steakhouse, and Asian food.

After the interview, Kim writes: Joe is excited about joining University Park UMC and sharing his love of Christ. Please join us for his first Sunday at our church, online, on July 5. He will be preaching that day and the congregation will have an informal drive-by opportunity to welcome him and Sarah, along with Ellie and Sam, from 1:00-3:00 pm. In these first few weeks, Joe will be introducing himself to small groups of the church and he looks forward to meeting everyone very soon!

Let us join together in opening our hearts and our minds to the gifts and graces Rev. Joe Stobaugh is bringing to the life of our church family and community!

Grace & Peace,  
Stephen

## Poetry, Prose & Ponderings

Lots of us have found ourselves with a little extra time on our hands lately. And there are just so many re-runs of Mayberry RFD that you can watch! (Or any TV binge-watching of whatever is your “guilty pleasure.”) I know some of you are poetry-lovers, and I know some you are poetry-avoiders, too. That’s why we’re beginning a new *Senior Spotlight* feature called *Poetry, Prose & Ponderings*. It’s a place to share some poem or passage of prose that has found a special place in your heart. Think of the classics you love: “Two roads diverged in a yellow wood...,” “I think that I shall never see...,” “Let me live in a house by the side of the road...,” “and somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout; but there is no joy in Mudville...” Your submissions only require that you accompany your favored selection with some reflection on what it means (or has meant) to you and why, and that you agree to allow some editorial license to fit into available space. Mail submissions to “Senior Spotlight Poems & Prose; 4024 Caruth Blvd.; Dallas TX 75225,” or email “sfleming@upumc.org,” subject line “Senior Spotlight Poems & Prose.”



## Stay Connected to UPUMC

### Senior Life Online

Don’t forget that there is always something new to see on our website! Not only the weekly worship services, but newly-added presentations by Sunday School classes, weekly Bible study and reflections, and continuing updated programming for seniors. We have a brand new website up and running, and if you haven’t explored it, you may be missing something you would really like! And, oh boy!, I am especially pleased to report that Charles Hosch will be recording new material that will soon be posted to our website. Honestly, it’s not as good as actually physically being with each other and learning from each other as well as from our leaders, but second-best is the wealth of material found at [upumc.org](http://upumc.org). Much work, dedication, and energy has been invested in the on-line programming. I’m sure there is something there especially for you. [www.upumc.org](http://www.upumc.org)

### In Sympathy

Our prayers, sympathies and condolences extends to the families of Susan Rhoads, wife of Robert Rhoads, who died on the 3rd of June 2020, and of Lowell Winkler, husband of Ruth Winkler, who died on the 21st of June 2020.



### Drive Through Welcome to our New Pastoral Family

We had a HUGE turn-out to say “good-bye” to the Boone family a couple of weeks ago. Now let’s do the same to welcome our new pastor and his family this coming Sunday, July 5th. There will be treats and bubbles and fun for all as we have another informal drive-by opportunity to welcome Joe and Sarah, along with Ellie and Sam, from 1:00-3:00 pm. It will take place in the UPUMC parking lot off Pickwick Ave. ENTER through the Caruth-side (south) entrance and EXIT on the Colgate (north) side. Signs, ribbons, balloons, and noise-makers welcome. No fireworks, please!

## **Doors** by Dr. Randy Marshall

When I was a kid we never locked our doors at night. I remember during the day, my mom would holler for people to “come on in!” whenever she heard footsteps on the porch. She would only look up to see who it was...AFTER they had opened our creaky screen door.

Even to this day...in Dallas, Texas...my in-laws never lock their doors. Probably don't know where the key is.

People my age wax nostalgically about the “good old days.” Not sure they really were, but time has a way of crowding out bad memories.

Romance it wasn't, but the one thing I do miss is the hospitality that came with open doors. Today, fences separate yards and fancy alarm codes back up the back up systems.

The sad part is, whether it's country towns or the heart of Chicago, hospitality has been replaced by isolation. Anxiety vs. peace. Independence vs. community. It's not a shock to me anymore to hear of people found dead...days or weeks later. In their own homes. We live in an age of invisible people.

I've heard it said that when you die if you have one or two really good friends, consider yourself lucky. Reluctantly, I agree. So what's the solution to this pervasive sense of loneliness surrounded by a sea of people?

I think it has to do with doors. More specifically, one Door.

Before our house burned down in 2014, a favorite gallery of pictures in our home featured photos of doors taken in Europe. Behind each was an enchanting story.

Behind a Man named Jesus, many picturesque metaphors describe His story: a Shepherd, a Cornerstone, Mighty Counselor, Prince and King, a Prophet, a Physician, Wise Teacher, Friend, My favorite is how He described Himself: “I am the Door” (John 10:9).

The Door.

When I see an interesting one, I ask myself questions. What's it like on the other side? Who would greet me? Would I be invited to stay? Greeted with a hug? Viewed as an interruption? Welcomed or endured? I might even be curious to knock. Yet however inviting, it's far easier to stay away...then curse the cause of my loneliness.

Here's the interesting part to me. It works both ways. What if you're behind the door and want to have a visitor? A gracious guest? One who is so loving that if you finally open the door, your life will never be the same? The one visitor you would want to stay for a long, long time?

All other guests will leave you. Or you will leave them. It's only right. In and out through a door, to not risk overstaying your welcome. But, can you imagine; a Guest who arrives and never leaves? Unlike others, you won't want Him to.

“Behold I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and have fellowship with you,” Jesus (Revelation 3:20).

And while all doors have keys, there's a secret about this Door: it can only be unlocked from the inside.

The needy say, “come on in!”