

Katy's First United Methodist Church celebrates 125 years

BY SUSAN ROVEGNO
PUBLISHER

Katy First United Methodist Church will celebrate 125 years of serving the Katy community, with a special service on September 24th at 11 a.m. Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey will officiate and a banquet will follow at noon where a special proclamation will be read. The church is located at 5601 5th St, Katy.

The theme of the months-long celebration is "From Tradition to Trailblazers," recognizing both the rich tradition of the early settlers to Katy – many of whom were members of the church – as well as the legacy of service to the community, especially to its schools.

According to a clipping from an article in the April 8, 2011, edition of the Katy News, provided to the Katy Times by the church, the congregation was founded in 1898 when a group of Baptists, Disciples of Christ, Presbyterians, Quakers and Methodists organized a union Sunday school in the home of William James. Some time around 1900, the article continues, the Methodists formed their own fellowship. The Reverend M. Lindsey, who was the first pastor, also served as a "circuit rider," serving other churches in the area in addition to Katy. He was assisted by several of the early families of the church, including W. P. Bowers, J. E. Cabiness, E.M. Morton and T. G. Roberts. Lay members sometimes held worship services when the minister could not attend every Sunday.

In 1903, according to the article, land was secured from W. E. and R. M. Cash and from L. C. Luekel and a foundation for a frame church building was laid. The sanctuary was



KATY HERITAGE SOCIETY



SUSAN ROVEGNO

The current church building and sanctuary at at 5601 5th St, Katy, was completed in 1961. The church's original sanctuary was completed in 1904 and was the first church building constructed in the town of Katy, at the corner of Avenue A and Fifth Street.

completed in 1904 and was the first church building constructed in the town of Katy, at the corner of Avenue A and Fifth Street. It served the congregation until 1938 when a new sanctuary was built. The current structure at 5601 5th St, Katy, was completed in 1961. The Family Life Center was built in 1998 - 1999.

Around 2008 the church went through a lengthy process to determine whether it should relocate, renovate or rebuild the church facilities. A Discernment Task Force and churchwide vote determined that the church should remain in its current location and make the facilities more effective for future ministry. In 2012 the Connection Center was built in order to expand the Welcoming ministry. The project updated technology, video, sound, and lighting as well as making the building more accessible and welcoming.

"Throughout its history, the First United Methodist Church of Katy has provided significant service and leadership to the community," said the 2011 article, and that legacy continues to this day. Ministries of outreach to the community include:

- Home Delivered Meals started in 1983; by 2010 the church was serving 80 to 90 people in the community who were disabled, homebound, or seriously ill.

- Katy Christian Ministries formed in 1984– One of nine local churches that formed KCM food pantry in Katy. The pantry operated out of the basement of Katy First United Methodist Church. Still today the church supports KCM with food drives, Special events: Santa Sleigh, its annual gala and other projects.

- GriefShare –support group for people in grief.

- Thanksgiving Day Community Lunch, joining with Antioch Baptist Church when the lunch outgrew their facilities. With other local churches, the congregations fed around 1000 meals on Thanksgiving Day 2022.

- Host Daybreak to minister to people who are primary caregivers of people with dementia and to the people they care for.

- Prayer blankets.
- Harley's Helpers Angel Ministry – providing support and encouragement to families of children with cancer.

- Stephen Ministry providing encouragement to people recovering from crisis.

- Forever Friends for young adults with learning disabilities.

- Blood Drives and flu shots.
- Joyful Noisemakers – older adult ministry to nursing homes.

- Parkinson's Therapy.
- English as a Second Language.
- Adopt-a-highway clean up.
- Team of volunteers doing minor repairs for elderly and low-income residents.

- Angel Tree – Christmas gifts for children of incarcerated parents.
- Musical Monday Funday.

But the role of the church and its members' activities in the Katy community doesn't stop there. The church partners with three elementary schools in the area – Katy, Lindsey and Hutsell – with mentorship programs, shared parking facilities and more. "We are a church that serves with its hands and feet in the community," said Senior Pastor Mark Kimbrough. "We have a heartbeat for our schools, and there is such a great need in our community."

Congregation members have long had an active role in the greater Katy area's educational scene, from founding schools and implementing art programs to serving as teachers, volunteers and administrators. More than 15 current Katy ISD facilities are named for members of Katy's First United Methodist Church, including teachers, librarians, administrators, athletic directors, volunteers and even a superintendent.

Mentioned in the church's YouTube video (youtu.be/gC_thB4uf80) are Stockdick Junior High, Jordan High School, Betty Sue Creech Elementary, Morton Ranch Elementary and Morton Ranch High School (named for Elbert and Margaret Morton), Beckendorff Junior High, Jeanette Hayes Elementary, Jean and Betty Schmalz Elementary, Jack and Sharon Rhoads Elementary, Martha Lopez Aki Early Childhood Intervention Center, Zelma Hutsell Elementary, Garland McMeans Junior High, James E. Taylor High School, Robert Wright Rylander Elementary, James E. Williams Elementary, Cardiff Junior High and Franz Elementary.

Like all congregations in the Katy area, First United Methodist has experienced challenges – from COVID to the explosive growth of the area. "We are a church that began as a congregation serving a small rural farming community," said Kimbrough. "Everybody knew everybody." Now, he said, Katy is a part of suburban Houston with a more transient type of resident. "We are learning to embrace our history while also embracing the hardship of this transition."

What will the next 125 years bring? Kimbrough says that the church will remain where it is. "Location matters," he said. And the congregation will continue to serve the Katy area for as long as it is in existence. "This is a church that loves to meet the needs of this community. For the next 125 years, it will do what it is compelled to do. We have learned to love and embrace the diversity of our community. We are ready to be grateful and thankful. Now it is our turn with the Katy we have today. Our best days are ahead of us."

Water District Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 163 will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2023 on Thursday, September 28, 2023 at 9:30 a.m., at Allen Boone Humphries Robinson LLP, 3200 Southwest Freeway, Suite 2600, Brazos Room, Houston, Texas. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.texas.gov/PropertyTaxes) to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

FOR the proposal:	J. Hundl, O. Cabello & A. Zepeda
AGAINST the proposal:	(none)
PRESENT and not voting:	(none)
ABSENT:	R. Patrick & J. Ring

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year	This Year
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	<u>\$ 0.820</u> /\$100 Adopted	<u>\$ 0.765</u> /\$100 Proposed
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		<u>-\$0.055</u> /\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates (+/-)		<u>-6.7073%</u>
Average appraised residence homestead value	<u>\$676,355</u>	<u>\$748,113</u>
General homestead exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person's exemptions)	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>
Average residence homestead taxable value	<u>\$676,355</u>	<u>\$748,113</u>
Tax on average residence homestead	<u>\$5,546.11</u>	<u>\$5,723.06</u>
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)	<u>\$176.95</u> <u>3.1905%</u>	

NOTICE OF VOTE ON TAX RATE

If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 3.5 percent, an election must be held to determine whether to approve the operation and maintenance tax rate under Section 49.23602, Water Code.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

Questions regarding this notice can be directed to the tax office at (281) 499-1223.

Water District Notice of Public Hearing on Tax Rate

The Woodcreek Reserve Municipal Utility District will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2023 on Thursday, September 28, 2023 at 4:00 p.m., at the Katy Civic Center, 910 Ave. C, Katy, Texas 77493. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.texas.gov/PropertyTaxes) to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

FOR the proposal:	C. Foster, C. Caruthers, D. Cresap, M. Sheahan & J. Perkins
AGAINST the proposal:	(none)
PRESENT and not voting:	(none)
ABSENT:	(none)

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year	This Year
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	<u>\$ 0.530</u> /\$100 Adopted	<u>\$ 0.450</u> /\$100 Proposed
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		<u>-\$0.080</u> /\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates (+/-)		<u>-15.0943%</u>
Average appraised residence homestead value	<u>\$502,569</u>	<u>\$557,065</u>
General homestead exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled person's exemptions)	<u>-\$50,257</u>	<u>-\$83,560</u>
Average residence homestead taxable value	<u>\$452,312</u>	<u>\$473,505</u>
Tax on average residence homestead	<u>\$ 2,397.25</u>	<u>\$ 2,130.77</u>
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)	<u>-\$266.48</u> <u>-11.1161%</u>	

NOTICE OF VOTE ON TAX RATE

If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than 3.5 percent, an election must be held to determine whether to approve the operation and maintenance tax rate under Section 49.23602, Water Code.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

Questions regarding this notice can be directed to the tax office at (281) 499-1223.

Katy Times

SUSAN ROVEGNO | Publisher
GEORGE SLAUGHTER | News Editor
TYLER TYRE | Sports Editor
DEBBIE PREJEAN | Office Manager/Bookkeeper
MARISSA FERREIRA | Page Designer

OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 678, Katy, Texas, 77492-0678
PHONE: 281-391-3141

TO REPORT NEWS:
Call 281-391-3141 or email news@katytimes.com

TO REPORT SPORTS SCORES:
email sports@katytimes.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
The Katy Times (ISSN 067-180) is published on Thursday. Subscriptions are available for \$35 per year in Harris, Waller and Fort Bend counties and \$45 elsewhere. Subscribe at www.katytimes.com or by mailing payment and delivery information to Katy Times, P.O. Box 678, Katy, TX 77492-0678. Periodical-rate postage paid at Katy, Texas 77494.

CIRCULATION:
Address billing inquiries at 281-391-3141.

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to The Katy Times, P.O. Box 678, Katy, Texas, 77492-0678.