

DISTINGUISHED LIFE AWARD CLASS OF 2018



example of love for Jesus and each other has been an inspiration to all of us.

Val Dean and Jack Read joined St. Luke's in 1954 and have been faithful supporters of every minister who has served at St. Luke's. For 64 years they have "given themselves away in generosity and service!" Jack, who is a native Houstonian, has served St. Luke's as a Boy Scout leader, usher, member of the Board of Stewards and Houston Project committees, Habitat for Humanity volunteer, and UMCOR hurricane relief volunteer. For years he has been part of the woodshop team where members craft as many as 10,000 toys for non-profits each year. Jack also serves in the prayer room, is a Stephen Minister and has just completed the walk to Emmaus. Val Dean has been a member of United Methodist Women as well as serving on the Board of Stewards, UMCOR hurricane relief, and as a prayer room partner and Stephen Minister. They are long-time members of the Randy Smith Bible class. Val and Jack's



have seen Gethsemane through two mergers with other Methodist churches. They are most appreciative of the opportunities brought about by the merger of Gethsemane UMC with St. Luke's UMC, saying, "We were living in a bubble, the merger has brought us real opportunities to bring God's word to refugees and many other new people. This has been an eye-opener and a blessing. It is the most profound experience of our 47 years at this church and we have not even seen the full impact yet."

Peggy and Bob Harrison were high school sweethearts who married, moved to Houston and settled in the then-new Sharpstown neighborhood. They settled into Gethsemane United Methodist Church. It is the Challenger Sunday School class at Gethsemane that they call "the rock" of their spiritual experience, saying, "the bonds of class members have been the most important thing to us and to our family." When Bob took over as leader of the Missions Committee, he said he hated meetings and thus began dinner get-togethers. Bob said that Peggy's good cooking made this the best committee in the Methodist church! The Harrisons have taught Sunday School and been KIDS HOPE mentors. Peggy has shared her culinary skills with many committees and events and been active in the United Methodist Women and VBS. Bob has served on the Finance Committee, the Board of Stewards, Head of the Site Council, Houston Project, and Merger Committee. The Harrisons



on the Houston Project Committee and volunteered with Christian Community Center's Sunshine Resale Shop. Having spent her career in pediatric nursing, she has a special place for children and appreciates the opportunity for families to serve together through CCSC's Jingle Bell Express and Back to School programs. Recently retired, Rosemary moved to Richmond, Texas. But don't think for a minute that she will miss a choir rehearsal or Sunday morning at St. Luke's. "I have to be able to sing in the choir and stay at St. Luke's," she says. "This church is my home."

When **Rosemary Samuelson** moved to Houston as a nurse in 1968, one of the first things she did was to look for a church... and not just any church, it had to be one with a good choir. She visited churches and sang with several, but as soon as she tried St. Luke's, she knew immediately that she had found her home. She says it was the "discipline and knowledge of the leaders and their connections to people in the music world" that made all the difference. She loves the fact that under the leadership of first Bob Bennett, and now Sid Davis, the choir is "doing big stuff, and not just singing hymns. Singing with a church choir you realize that you are part of the service; you are leading worship and providing for the congregation." Rosemary grew up in a large family (eight siblings) and knows about family and that is what she has found at St. Luke's. For many years she was a member of the Bruncher's Sunday School Class, has served on the Board of Stewards, spent several years