

Distinguished Life Awards 2020



SUE AND JOHN FARRELL

"I love seeing how much impact the outreach of St. Luke's has on the lives of folks in our community. It has certainly impacted mine." Sue Farrell

"When we see God acting through another person, all we can hope for is that we can be that for someone else." John Farrell

Sue and John Farrell arrived at St. Luke's in 1979. They had a young family and were looking for a church with great preaching, music, and a wonderful children's program. Dr. Walter Underwood was the pastor and their children loved Sunday School. The Farrells started in the Voyagers Sunday School class for "young couples," and eventually, in 2000 transitioned to the Randy Smith Bible Study Class.

John, who is a retired architect, would come to serve and chair the Buildings and Grounds Committee three times over the years. In 1982, Dr. Jim Moore told him that the Fellowship Hall looked "tired" and asked him to help fix it up. So began decades of pro bono service to the original building and several additions and renovations. John was also called to serve on the Finance Committee and the Board of Stewards and was the Board of Stewards Chair in 2000. He felt that that assignment was the most impactful because he got to see firsthand the range of all the incredible things that God was doing through St. Luke's and share it with the congregation.

In 2012 "What if..." a major building campaign, launched under the "courageous and gutsy leadership of Tom Pace." As Building Committee Chair John would oversee that project from initial drawings to the ribbon-cutting on Fellowship Walk in 2016.

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Sue began her service on the staff in 1999 as Wedding Coordinator. Working for years with mothers, daughters and friends of all ages through the Round Top Retreat led to a desire to bring that awesome fellowship home to St. Luke's, and the start of Women's Ministry, which she would lead.

What really makes Sue's heart beat faster is her work with Outreach. Chairing the Houston Project Committee was a highlight as she visited and connected with the amazing kingdom-minded non-profits.

As a couple, John and Sue lead the Wroxton Small Group and are eager to see where God will lead them next in service to his Kingdom and this church.

MARY AND JIM HENDERSON



"One of my most influential faith mentors, Joe Eason, gave me this advice, 'When St. Luke's calls, you just say yes' and so that is what I have done." Jim Henderson

"So many people supported me, and God was with me, and I managed to grow when I stepped up. In the end, we always got more out of serving than those we served." Mary Henderson

Like so many others, Mary and Jim Henderson came to St. Luke's because someone invited them. Jim worked at Methodist Hospital, and two of his colleagues asked them to attend the Adult Bible Study Class taught by Randy Smith. Shortly thereafter, Walter Underwood, who was Pastor at First Methodist Church in Fort Worth, was called to St. Luke's. Since that was the same Fort Worth church Jim had grown up in, they saw this as

their own calling, and on Confirmation Sunday in 1976, the Hendersons joined St. Luke's and quickly became involved and active in many areas of congregational life.

Mary loved being in the Circles of the United Methodist Women and grew in the closeness and nurture of the strong, wise and faithful women who became her lifelong mentors and friends. It made a large church feel small and also prepared her for leadership in the UMW in the years to come.

Mary went on to serve in the Hospitality, Stewardship, Capital Campaigns, Worship and Caring ministries and the Houston Project as well as the Church Lay Leader and a member of the Executive Committee. "I did not think I could do many of the things that were required in these roles — like speaking to large groups. Yet, so many people supported me, and God was with me, and I managed to grow when I stepped up. In the end, we always got more out of serving than those we served."

Jim views Walter Underwood, Jim Moore, Randy Smith and Joe Eason as his most influential faith mentors. Joe gave him the advice, "when St. Luke's calls, you just say yes." A natural teacher, he started out teaching Student Sunday School and then moved on to young couples. He recalls that a young group he helped start and organize had to be "married, engaged, or serious." Having come full circle, today Jim teaches the Randy Smith Class — the same class renamed in Randy's honor and memory that he and Mary had joined over four decades earlier. Over those years, he also served as leader of the Stewardship Campaign and Board Chair, among many other positions. He decided that he wanted to come forward to re-dedicate his life to Christ and the church on the Sunday he was to begin his leadership of the Board. He invited and encouraged others to join him. Well over 50 people came down the aisle after him that day. It was a "wow" moment that he will always cherish.

The Hendersons are thrilled to see the next generation of leaders coming forward. Their advice to them is simply stated: "When St. Luke's calls, just say YES!"



MARIAN ROPER

"Get involved with what interests you; if it's children, do that! If it's outreach to the community, do that! The needs of our church are so different now, and I'm proud that St. Luke's and Gethsemane see that. Our Gethsemane teens are such a wonderful group! I call their names every day as I pray because they are so special." Marian Roper

Marian and her husband and two daughters came to Gethsemane in 1956 when it still met in temporary quarters. After the church was constructed, Marian served as a Sunday School teacher, and in the mid-1960s ran VBS, which she said was "a very big undertaking."

Later, Marian was drawn to Women's Ministry, and she became a charter member of the WSCS, the Women's Society of Christian Service, which became the UMW. When she served as WSCS President, and she felt

her strongest bond to the church. Her advice: "Get involved with what interests you; if it's children, do that! If it's outreach to the community- do that! The needs of the church are so different now, and I'm proud that St. Luke's and Gethsemane see that. It used to be all about setting up worship in the 50s, but our neighborhood and congregation have changed so much and there are families with young ones that need our assistance."

She also remembers a very moving church service where people were giving their witness, and her husband gave his. It is a big moment in her faith journey that she will never forget. In the late 80s, Marian's husband became ill and died in 1989. She joined the Discoverers (an Adult Sunday School class for singles) and later the Questers, and served as president of each. Leadership is a gift in Marian and she has shared that gift so faithfully with her church.

When you unite with a church for 64 years, you see a lot of pastors come and go and Marian has appreciated each one. "Founding Pastor, Keith Kallow, James Lee Riley, Dick Jenkins, Jack Albright, Gus Browning and when the merger with St. Luke's came, Justin Coleman who was perfect for that change. And David? You just can't beat David Horton. Our Gethsemane teens are such a wonderful group! I call their names every day as I pray because they are so special. I want their faith to grow. It's hard to imagine anyone without faith. Tragedy will come someday, so build on it. Everywhere you go, God is present."

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. Philippians 1:3-5