

We are excited that Pastor Joel Robbins has arrived. His first sermon, on redemption and communion, was of great interest, particularly the story of the two Iraqis.

It is easy to be frustrated by the limited opportunity to meet Pastor Joel. Please have patience, as there will be numerous chances in the coming weeks. Pastor Joel will meet with members in small groups, such as Sunday school classes. When meeting Pastor Joel, please remember to practice appropriate Covid hygiene measures. And please introduce yourself, even if seeing Pastor Joel for the third or fourth time. He will need our help to learn all of our names, and wearing masks only makes it harder.

As we've already seen, Pastor Joel brings a muscular style of preaching, firmly rooted in the Bible. Expect to hear terms such as Arminian and prevenient grace. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, relied on Arminianism, which when explained, is often compared to Calvinism. Calvinism leans toward limited free will, while Arminianism embraces free will. Pastor Joel will gladly explain further in response to your questions.

Pastor Joel has long family roots in the Methodist Church, with a great grandfather, his father, his two brothers, and his wife Christie all serving as pastors. As a result, he is no stranger to controversy and differences of opinion in the church. He advises that he will lead by example as he hears us and treats us with respect. We might not persuade him to our line of thinking, but he will listen.

Pastor Joel also brings a tireless energy to our church. He is brimming with new ideas, some short term to address our limited face-to-face opportunities, some long term. He will announce these when ready. He wishes to make disciples of us all, instilling the teachings, expanding the role of the church in the community and actively inviting any and all to attend our church. Wherever Joel goes, whether it's a restaurant, a drug store, etc., he invites people to come see what AUMC is.

His wife Christie is at Arborlawn in Fort Worth. Unfortunately, we won't see her as much as we hoped since she'll be busy Sundays. Their two youngest, Marion and Tom, will attend Arborlawn initially, but we are free to convince them that our church is the place to go. Son Brandon and his wife are in College Station attending school.

We look forward to a long and fruitful pastorate with Pastor Joel here in Aledo. Please join us in welcoming and supporting Pastor Joel as we all work to make our church better.

Your SPR committee