



John Edward Trnka
Pastor 1985 – 1994

Born in Chicago. Gained Bachelor of Divinity and Doctorate of Divinity at Eden Seminary, Webster Groves, Missouri on 1966 and 1972, respectively.

Called to St. Paul Church on April 28, 1985. Installed as Senior Pastor, October 27, 1985.

Family: wife Shirley, and children, daughter Debra Ann and son John.

Trnka brought an ecumenical touch to the church, a ministry of relating to other faiths. He was a very active member of Belleville Area Clergy Association whose mission was one of interfaith cooperation.

On January 24, 1988, Patriotic Sunday was celebrated. For many years, the children in the Church School would parade to Eimer's Hill for a church picnic. In remembrance of this, the school children had a short parade and picnic.

The overall celebration was held in the Activity Center to raise money for the Organ fund. Two patriotic concerts were held that day with William Warfield as a guest soloist. The public was invited.

In Trnka's tenure, St. Paul's celebrated our 150th anniversary.

As part that, members of our congregation rebuilt and furnished a cottage at the St. Clair Associated Vocation Enterprises (SAVE) site at Turkey Hill, Illinois.

In 1990, the Fine Arts Committee of St. Paul's was formed by Norbert Krausz, the church Music Director.

In 1991, the church, led by Trnka and a member, Albert Wunderlich, started an action that led to the establishment of the Franklin Neighborhood Association.

He retired in October of 1994.

Information Sources:

The History segment of the St. Paul UCC 175th Anniversary insert to the Belleville News-Democrat newspaper of Sunday January 12, 2014. Material researched and prepared by Alice Jerome, Archivist of St. Paul's Church.

Moments in History pamphlets compiled by Archivist Alice Jerome for insert to St. Paul's Church Service Programs during the 150th Anniversary year (1989)

Other information in the church archives.