

Pastor's Bio

Rev. Juan Cantú Jr. has currently been appointed to serve as Senior Pastor of Oxford United Methodist Church in San Antonio, Texas. Pastor Johnny is a graduate of Texas Lutheran University of Seguin Texas, where he received a BA in Psychology and received his Theological and Doctrinal studies through the Course of Study Program at Perkins School of Theology through Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. He has successfully completed the Basic and Advance courses which have allowed him to become Ordained as Elder of the United Methodist Church this past June 2016 at the Rio Texas Annual Conference.

Pastor Johnny received his call to ministry after attending the Emmaus Walk in 1994 and began to serve in church ministry at Iglesia Metodista Unida Dios Es Amor of La Feria, Texas which was under the leadership of Lay Servant Israel Garcia and Rev. Jose Galindo. His first Lay Servant appointment was made by Superintendent Rev. Eubaldo Ponce in 1995 to a small Mission church located North of Edinburg in Faysville, Texas where he served till May of 2003. This eventually led him to answer the call to full-time ministry and receiving his first Episcopal appointment in 2003-2010 to Bethel UMC of Raymondville, Texas and followed by La Trinidad UMC of Seguin, Texas in 2010 where he served as Senior Pastor till June 2016. Pastor Johnny currently serves in various committees in both Conference and District levels. The heart of Pastor Johnny's message is that the Church of Jesus Christ must make herself visible to the community and thus challenges the local church that **NOW** is the time to move (GO) beyond the four walls. "I tell you, **NOW** is the time of God's favor, **NOW** is the day of salvation." 2 Corinthians 6:2b NIV. Since answering the call, Pastor Johnny's life work has been to carry the gospel to **ALL** beyond the local church and abroad by working from within the connectionalism of United Methodist Church family.

Born in Edinburg Texas on December 05, 1972, to parents Juan and Aurelia, Pastor Johnny was the youngest of ten. In 1992 he then married Idaly Mora of Edinburg Texas and both have birthed two wonderful children, Jonathan David and Jenesis Idaly whom both currently live with them. Pastor Johnny credits his lovely wife Idaly for leading him to know and accept Jesus Christ through her life's teachings and examples which she has shared with him for the past 24 years of marriage. GOD is GOOD!

Now to my friends at Oxford UMC, please know that my passion has always been to serve the Kingdom of God by leading and teaching many to embrace the love that God has for all. I find great joy reaching souls beyond the four walls of the local church, yet teaching and helping them to discern their personal calling. I believe just as the pastor needs to exercise his calling, so must the church exercise its gifts and graces, in order to grow the kingdom of God. As the church, a shining city on a hill, we must not be afraid to come down and shine for the unreached, the marginalized, or as scripture teaches "*the least of these*" Matthew 25:40. Even a shining city on a hill can go unseen from below, with all the clutter, distress, and worries one might experience in their lives. "*NOW is the time of God's favor*".

With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, together we can and will press forward, taking courageous steps through the parted waters and leading this new generation to God's promises. I will strive hard to teach and equip today's leaders in becoming strong witnesses of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Leaders, who will not fear in guiding the steps of a younger generation of believers and non-believers into a full covenant with God. I am asking you to please journey with me through the parted waters, putting our hands on the plow, reaching out to touch the hem of HIS garment, running towards the prize and only looking unto Jesus Christ the author and finisher of our faith. Amen

In His Service

Blessings, *Pastor Johnny*