



Gospel Echoes

January 2012



A Word from Pastor John...

Dear members & friends of the St. Luke's UMC:

I want to begin by saying "thank you" for the beautiful cards, Christmas goodies and Christmas love gift. I also appreciate the kind words of affirmation for our ministry that many of you expressed, and Melinda and I are grateful!

As I write, we are coming to the end of 2011, and standing on the brink of another New Year. I am grateful for the many blessings of this past year and looking forward to the blessings and challenges of the coming year. The following are some important events that are coming up here at St. Luke's.

1) My *Romans* Bible Study resumes on Monday January 16th at 6:30 pm and Wednesday January 18th at 1:30 pm.

2) *Wonderful Wednesdays* resumes on January 18th with the meal served at 5:45pm, followed by the various classes and *Men's Fraternity* 3.

3) *Men's Fraternity* 2 resumes on Thursday January 19th at 6:30 pm.

4) *Upward Basketball* begins Saturday January 21st

and runs through Sunday March 10th.

5) Our *Mission Conference* with Dr. Wes and Joy Griffin will be Friday April 27th through Sunday April 29th.

Another very important event for United Methodists is our *General Conference*, which convenes every four years, and is scheduled to meet April 24th through May 4th in Tampa, Florida. Please be praying that the delegates to *General Conference* will stay true to biblical principles and NOT follow the lead of some other main-line denominations that have departed from the historical, classical understanding of scriptural teaching in regard to the issue of homosexuality. There is a very vocal and well-organized group in the United Methodist Denomination that wants to over-turn our present position about this issue as it now stands in our *Book of Discipline*. It states:

Homosexual persons no less than heterosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth. All persons need the ministry and guidance of the church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self. The United Methodist Church does not condone the

practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching. Para.161.G

I believe this statement in our *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* is both concise and compassionate in regard to this issue, and our church needs to maintain the clear teaching of the *Word of God*. There are a multitude of subjects that will be discussed and voted on, at *General Conference*, but no single issue has the potential to bring schism to the church like this one, so pray that God's truth will prevail!

As we move into a New Year together, let's continue to do all we can, with God's help, to seek His highest and best for our lives and the church. Someone said it like this:

"We need to get on our knees and pray like *everything* depends on God, then get up and work like *everything* depends on us"! Well said!

Onward & Upward

Pastor John

Pastor Mitch's Corner

New Beginnings!

Once again we come to the beginning of a new year! Where did this last one go? Nonetheless, we have an opportunity to "start over" again. With the passing of another year comes what seems to be my one and only resolution for every new year I've seen for the past decade – lose weight! Yes, the people of St. Luke's know how to eat... and now as we head into winter, I've successfully managed to add my winter bulk to keep me warm plus an extra 10-15 pounds of all that delicious food. So, along with many of you, I'll start a new diet in January. What I need to do is create good, permanent habits when it comes to eating and exercising.

For those things that we resolved to do in 2011 and were not able to continue through the year, it probably involved discipline. We have to work at being disciplined – no one said everything would be easy!! And we also have to work at being disciple's of Christ.

I want to challenge you this year when you're making your New Year's resolutions to make one involving the disciplines of your daily Christian discipleship. I want to encourage everyone to spend time in God's Word each day.

Doing a daily devotional like Upper Room, Daily Bread, or one of the many others you can pick up at a Christian bookstore is also an excellent way of being a disciplined follower of Christ. Prayer is a vital part of a disciple's journey as well.

Using our gifts and talents in service to God is also part of being a disciple. I hope each of you will make a commitment to become involved in at least one ministry opportunity this year.

Here's to a great discipleship journey in 2012!

'Twas the month after Christmas

'Twas the month after Christmas,
When all through the house,
Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse!
The cookies I'd nibbled,
The eggnog I'd taste...
At the holiday parties,
Had gone to my waist!
I remember the marvelous meals all prepared:
The gravies and sauces,
The beef "nicely rared".
The wine and the rum balls,
The bread and the cheese,
And the way I NEVER said,
"No, thank you, please."
As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt,
And prepared once again to do battle with dirt,
I said to myself (as only I can),
"You can't spend a winter disguised as a MAN!"
So---away with the last of the sour cream dip,
Get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and chip!
Every last bit of food that I like must be banished,
'Til all of the additional "ounces" have vanished!
I won't have a cookie,
Not even a lick!
I'll want only to chew,
On a celery stick!
I won't have hot biscuits,
Or corn bread or pie,
I'll munch on a carrot,
And quietly cry.
I'm hungry...I'm lonesome...and life is a bore!
But isn't that what January is for?
Unable to giggle,
No longer a riot!
HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL,
AND TO ALL A GOOD DIET!

St. Luke's Youth Ministry

Don't miss Youth Group on Sundays in January starting on January 8th from 6:00 to 8:00pm.

Girl's Bible Study Forming

Christin Walls will be leading a Bible Study for Jr. & Sr. High Girls this semester. Please see Christin or Pastor Mitch for more details.

Wonderful Wednesdays begins on January 18th

Join us for dinner at 5:45pm then our Bible Study from 6:30 to 7:45pm. We will be doing a Bible Refresher / Bible 101 class this semester. Bring your Bible and let's have a great semester!



01.28.2012 Conseco Fieldhouse

Join us as we venture to the "Rock & Worship Roadshow" in Indy for the 4th annual tour where we'll see an all-star bill featuring MercyMe, Tenth Avenue North, LeCrae, Hawk Nelson, Disciple, Sidewalk Prophets and Rend Collective Experiment. The line-up will also include special guest speaker, and MercyMe frontman, Bart Millard.

Watch for sign-ups! Cost is \$10. 4pm-10pm.

You are always encouraged to invite friends to our activities!!

To our family and friends,

A lot has been happening in our lives in recent months and while some of you know various details about what has happened, we thought it would be good to share everything with you.

Jim will be writing in the 3rd person. He started taking classes full time at Asbury Theological Seminary this past September and the semester is now over. This semester he took a core class called Vocation of Ministry, Exegesis of Acts, and Introduction to Hebrew. He was going to take a class in Greek too, but was able to test out of the required 2 semesters of Greek prior to the start of the semester. This allowed him to contribute some as a Teaching Assistant for the introductory Greek class. He also started working as a bank teller at a small or medium sized bank here in the Lexington area. He has been able to handle full time work, school, and family pretty well and is grateful to have found a good job in this economy. In the coming semester Jim will be taking 3 more classes: Exegesis of Corinthians, Biblical Archaeology, and Introduction to Hebrew 2, and two Teaching Assistantships in Greek and Hebrew. It is bound to be a busy semester, but Jim is looking forward to the time off in the next month and reading ahead so he'll start class with a head start. At this point he is planning on finishing up his degree in May 2014 with 75 hours, beyond the required 60 for the degree, and will move on to a Doctoral program from there.

Meagan: At the moment I have to sacrifice being a stay at home mom to help finance Jim's graduate degree. I tutor two grade school children during the week in reading and math and on the weekends I waitress at a fancy restaurant called the Glitz in Nonesuch, KY. It's a place William Schatner frequently dines. When I'm not working I'm active with a small group of girls in our seminary neighborhood, sewing crafty things, or baking something new.

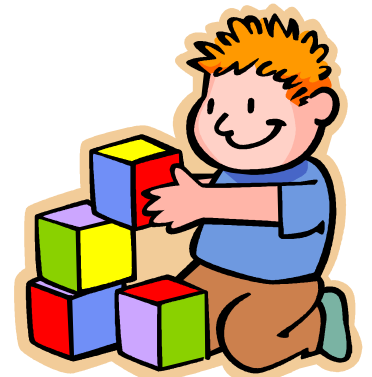
Eliam and Silas are growing way too fast.

Eliam is potty trained and after a month of constantly cleaning the walls, trash can, floor, and back of the toilet is now proficient at aiming. At 2.5 can count to 12, tell you all colors, what animals eat, the planets (he calls Uranus My-ranus), most of the alphabet letters, nursery rhymes, 2 bible verses, he can jump off the third step on the porch, loves to build legos with daddy, and we are trying to teach him colors in Spanish. Eliam makes us laugh almost every day.

Silas at 9 months (December 23) has been crawling for several weeks. He is much faster at army crawling but typically can remain stationary because his older brother brings him toys. He has 8 teeth, loves to find any bits or lego pieces on the floor and put them in his mouth, gags every time we feed him bananas, has already had 2 haircuts because a small patch of hair grows extremely fast on the top of his head, and is already attempting to pull himself up on things. These two boys are so rowdy and fun!

Love,

The Wilson Family (Jim, Meagan, Eliam, and Silas)



Missions Moment



Kokomo Urban Outreach's mission is to offer Hope, connect Communities and strengthen Families--- neighborhood by neighborhood. The Hope we offer is the saving knowledge of Jesus; we strive to be Christ-like and lift up the name of Jesus in everything we do. Kidmo and Club 45 teaches the Bible to children across the city and how they are loved by Jesus. We connect people in communities with each other through weekend meals, block parties and other community activities. We also connect families to community resources that are available to them. Families are strengthened through Baby University, life skill classes, as well as fine arts classes. Issues of poverty are addressed as children are prepared to learn on Monday, because they had food to eat on the weekend. The only way out of poverty is education, and when a mentor is added it doubles the chances of breaking the cycle of poverty.

KUO currently has a presence in 26 different neighborhoods, operates 4 pantries, as well as the Food To You Pantry (in conjunction with the Kokomo Rescue Mission) delivers 850 Buddy Bags into 6 schools. KUO provides meals to 600 individuals each Sunday and serves lunch when the school children are on breaks. Jeff Newton, the Executive Director of KUO, serves on numerous community boards, and has been instrumental in establishing the Trolley.

KUO has been blessed to have a great support system in St. Luke's UMC---volunteers, food collections, prayer support as well as financial support. Your continued support will help us continue to make a difference in our community.

Thanks

Jeff Newton YOU CAN SUPPORT KUO THIS MONTH BY PUTTING YOUR LOOSE COINS IN THE OFFERING PLATE

As a Church, we support the 'local' through 'international' ministries and missionaries through our prayers, and our monies. We take seriously Jesus' words in both Matthew 28:19 *"Go and make disciples of all nations,..."* and Acts 1:8 *"...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem/Kokomo, Judea/Indiana, Samaria/USA, and to the ends of the earth! [Like India, Tanzania, and Ghana!]"* Now obviously we can't 'be' there...but we can support our missionaries who are!

As the economy continues to 'slump' how do we as a Church in general, and a Missions Team in particular, not neglect our missionaries? How do we support them? One thought came to try the 'Greeting Cards'. Many of us buy Hallmark or American Greeting Cards. Might you consider purchasing the Greeting Cards that are found **in a folder** on the Missions table in the South West corner of the Welcome Area? If you have any questions, please contact anyone on the Missions Team. Shannon Westray-Chair, John Walls, Mitch Norwood, Carol Campbell, Nancy Rushton, Patty Cohee, Larry Ditmer, Rebecca Shulz, Cindi Myers, Julie Householder is going off the missions team but would be aware of the cards program. 1 card - \$3.00 8 cards - \$20.00

If the office is opened, and it is during the week, please give the funds to Julie Householder. If you write a check, make it out to **St. Luke's** and in the memo: **Missions/Greeting Cards**. That way we can track these funds and how they are doing. If it is on Sunday, place in one of the pew envelopes, and either place it in the offering plate, or hand it to one of the Missions Team members. Of course you can always give any funds that the LORD puts on your heart to give to our Missionaries and ministries that we support! God bless you!!!

Our ATTENDANCE for the month of DECEMBER...

12/04/2011:
8:30: 171; 11:00: 68

12/11/2011:
10:00: 280

12/18/2011:
8:30: 162; 11:00: 85

12/25/2011:
10:00:

The 2012 St. Luke's stewardship campaign desires to teach the basics of Christian stewardship. Here is our message for January:

God uses money to illustrate His power.

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,' says the Lord Almighty."
(Malachi 3:10)

Our GIVING for the month of DECEMBER...



November total: \$52,299.60

October needed: \$49,815.08

October difference: \$2,484.52

12/04/2011: \$17,739.21

12/11/2011: \$15,237.43

12/18/2011: \$20,747.16



UMW News

Hope Circle will not be meeting in January or February due to possible inclement weather. We will meet again in March.

Naomi Circle will meet on Tuesday, January 3rd, at 6:00 PM, at Plate Street Grill. Call Nancy McClure at 864-9373 for a reservation. Join us!



UMW NEWS FROM NANCY:

- ◆ Thanks for all who donated to the scarf, hat, and mitten tree for Kokomo Urban Outreach. One could hardly see green on the branches!
- ◆ Two future dates to put on your calendar: May 12, which is the Mother/Daughter lunch—program will be on antique doilies, aprons, hankies, etc., presented by Rhoda Barkman. Guest vocalist will be Mary Martin. December 1 will be the Advent lunch. It will be a Winter Wonderland filled with bells. Don't miss either program.
- ◆ I am heading south where the palm trees sway in the warm air. See you in the spring.
- ◆ Join a circle—receive a blessing.

—Nancy Slaubaugh, UMW President



Winter



"Let Us" Ministry scripture: "Let us encourage one another." - Hebrews 10:25

"Let Us" start the new year off right by making contact with our "Let Us" person.

J JOY FELLOWSHIP will be on winter vacation in January and February. We'll resume meeting in March. Mark your calendar for Friday, March 2nd, at 11:00 AM, for the next meeting.

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St. Luke's Loving God,
Loving People
United Methodist Church Library
700 Southway Blvd E., Kokomo, IN 46902
(765) 453-0555 www.stlukesumc.net

**LINC — Library
Information News
Connection**
Vol. 10, Iss. 1 — Jan. 2012

A NOTE OF



The Library would like to thank St. Luke's United Methodist Women for the generous donation received from this year's Bazaar proceeds. Some new materials have already been purchased as well as a few operating expenditures. What a blessing it is to have such support.



Fifty-eight items were recently catalogued into the Library—everything from Non-fiction commentaries to fictional romances set in the Amish community. Check out some of the items on the shelves located in the hallway to the Fellowship Hall. Check it out!

St. Luke's Library Desk schedule: Please recruit a substitute if needed.

| | 9:50-10:00 a.m. | 11:00-11:10 a.m. |
|--------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Jan 1 | Happy New Year (one service) | Nina Sozansky |
| Jan 8 | Nancy McClure | Sandy Price |
| Jan 15 | Fannie Rody | Mary Lott |
| Jan 22 | Nancy Boughton | Nina Sozansky |
| Jan 29 | Wayne Sozansky | Arlinda Baszner |



For more information, please contact Nina Sozansky, St. Luke's Librarian, by phone 437-6712 or by email: nsoz@vfemail.net

Prayer ministry news

by Paula Shrock



Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Lord. As I begin to lead our congregation in prayer ministry opportunities, I am humbled to be in this position, and I ask for your prayers for me to hear God's voice and obey His plan for this ministry. I am praying for us to become more like Jesus as individuals and as a congregation. I can almost hear Him saying that we are to be a house of prayer. I believe that God is pleased that we have stepped up to recent opportunities for us to pray.

For one thing, He led many of us to participate in the prayer vigil for the special services we hosted in September and October. Then several of us committed to praying and fasting for 40 days as we participated in the Awaken US nationwide event. I know that has not been easy during the holidays, but you were faithful to the end.

There are two more prayer opportunities in the Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church that we are invited to be a part of. First, we are in the midst of something called "Blanket Indiana in Prayer." Here is what our district newsletter has to say about it:

The Conference Prayer Team is gathering prayer requests regarding the various pieces and ministries of the connected church - local congregation, cluster, district, Annual Conference, and General Conference, between now and Annual Conference. We plan to send the completed requests to the Prayer Team and others who would be willing to pray now. In addition, the requests will be placed in or on a prayer blanket so that those who come to the Prayer Room at Annual Conference next year can hold the blanket and pray over the requests, as well. Your prayer requests may be emailed to the [North Central District office](mailto:northcentral.district@inumc.org) at northcentral.district@inumc.org.

Another year-long prayer emphasis has been announced by Bishop Mike Coyner. He asked each congregation to pray for five other congregations every Monday through Friday in 2012, a total of 25 a week. Each week's list of churches to be prayed for will be posted on the inumc.org website. The object is to lift our sister United Methodist Churches in prayer at least once during the year. That means we will be prayed for by all of the congregations in the Indiana Conference on one specific day in 2012. As soon as that list becomes available, we will publish it weekly in the bulletin for you to take home and pray for the churches with some prayer topics that will help you pray.

Grace be with you.

HERITAGE MOMENT:

Did you know that we were organized in 1891 as the First Church of the United Brethren in Christ, formed by the dedication of a few faithful Christian people and ministers headed by Mrs. Maria B. Woodworth, a famous trance evangelist? The first building was a small frame building at the corner of Madison and Freemont (now Armstrong) Streets.



Food collection will take place January 15th for Kokomo Urban Outreach - bags will be distributed after each service on January 8th. Our regular food collection for February will be on Feb. 5th with bags being distributed on Jan. 29th. Thank you very much for your continued support of our food collections each month!
—Mark 10:45 Small Group

The Mark 10:45 Small Group that meets at 8:30 am on Sunday mornings is starting a new study on January 8th entitled: Elisha, Encountering the messenger of salvation. We would love for you to join us. If you would like to join us please contact Lori Collins at 765-434-9359 so that we can order you a book. The book cost is \$7.81.

January 2012 Parish Nurse News by Cindi Myers RN, BSN



How did the discipline of fasting go? For some of us we accepted Pastor John's challenge of Fasting for Revival and Renewal from November 21 through December 31. I did a combination of a Daniel Fast, [or partial fast], as well as once a week taking a meal away and praying instead....And I have to tell you... I did lousy! I meditated on how obsessed I was with food, and how I had no control.

On a related topic I would like to refer to Tuft's, along with Duke Medicine Health-News . The culture we live in with the bombardment of commercials just doesn't support a healthy lifestyle or especially something additional like: fasting... I believe that in many ways they are intertwined.

Tufts Sept. '11 reports: "America is getting fatter, with dire consequences for the nation's health." The next news clip claims: "America continues to eat larger portions of foods, and we are also eating more often". Why do you think this is so? Why can't we fill up on Christ, and our Spiritual Food of His Word, and His Holy Spirit? Why this drive to eat?

In The Duke News July '11, the headline blared: THE BIOLOGY OF FOOD ADDICTION. "Neural activity in certain regions of the brain indicate that *food addiction can be as strong as drug or alcohol dependence.*" [If anyone is interested I have the article]. The bottom line is we need to stop the blame, and start to get help. Most benefit from group activity such as **Weight Watchers**.

Tufts Health & Nutrition Letter in the October '11 summarizes three on-line networks that are helping some people: **Lose It!** Is an iPhone application that can help. In 2010 Washington Post listed it as the 18th best iPhone application. **StickK.com** is a website. Its mission is: "To empower you to better your lifestyle and achieve your goals, whether losing weight, running a marathon, or quitting smoking." Another site is **SparkPeopl.com**. According to Business Week, this is the #1 weight loss and fitness website with more than 9 million users. It offers nutrition, health and fitness tools, and support and resources.

For the New Year, when you might feel motivated to do those Resolutions, here are some suggestions:

Week 1 Make an effort to eat **5 to 9 servings of fruit and vegetables** every day. Make every effort to **not** add butter, salt, or creams with them. Add berries or banana in your cereal, carrots or zucchini to your casseroles. Go meatless at least once a week. Make a stir-fry or soup with the vegetables being the main dish.

Week 2 For the competitive person in you, get a pedometer. Ideally you should get 10,000 steps a day. The main thing is get up off that chair and start walking!

Week 3 Make sleep a priority. Obesity and sleep deprivation has been linked. Sleep deprivation also makes you more prone to high blood pressure, diabetes and other risk factors. Aim for 7 to 9 hours of sleep on most nights. If you are not even close, try going to bed 10 minutes earlier each night until you achieve the 7 to 9 hours.

Week 4 Do one de-stressing activity each day. Prayer and meditation, with slow deep breathing is one activity. Social "networking" such as going to church and belonging to a prayer group or accountability group or Circle can also help. Supportive friends and family have been associated with a lower heart disease risk.

Let us continue to ask our LORD, our SAVIOR, or Teacher and our Guide and Friend to help us in this.

January 2012

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1 10:00am Worship | 2 8:30am OFFICE CLOSED 4:00pm Upward Practice | 3 1:00pm Staff Meeting 4:00pm Upward Practice | 4 1:00pm Prayer/Bible Study 4:00pm Upward Practice | 5 8:00am Seekers 4:00pm Upward Practice 7:00pm Praise Team Practice | 6 4:00pm Upward Practice | 7 |
| 8 8:30am Worship 10:00am Sun. School for all ages 11:00am Worship 1:00pm Girl Scouts 6:00pm Youth Group | 9 11:45am Altar Prayer 4:00pm Prayer and Share 4:00pm Upward Practice 5:00pm Stephen Ministry | 10 1:00pm Staff Meeting 4:00pm Upward Practice | 11 1:00pm Prayer/Bible Study 4:00pm Upward Practice | 12 8:00am Seekers 4:00pm Upward Practice 7:00pm Praise Team Practice | 13 4:00pm Upward Practice | 14 8:00am UMM Breakfast @ Golden Corral 9:00am BOOM |
| 15 8:30am Worship 10:00am Sun. School for all ages 11:00am Worship 1:30pm BoyScout Venture 6:00pm Youth Group | 16 11:45am Altar Prayer 4:00pm Upward Practice 6:00pm Gideons Meeting 6:30pm Pastor's Bible Study | 17 1:00pm Staff Meeting 4:00pm Upward Practice | 18 1:00pm Prayer/Bible Study 1:30pm Pastor John's Bible Study 4:00pm Upward Practice 5:15pm Mentored HandBells 5:45pm Won. Wed. Meal 6:30pm Won. Wed. Classes 8:00pm Choir Practice | 19 8:00am Seekers 4:00pm Upward Practice 6:30pm Men's Fraternity 2 7:00pm Praise Team Practice | 20 8:00am Newsletter Deadline 9:30am Linda Smith's Bible Study 4:00pm Upward Practice | 21 9:00am Upward Games |
| 22 8:30am Worship 10:00am Sun. School for all ages 11:00am Worship 6:00pm Youth Group | 23 11:45am Altar Prayer 4:00pm Prayer and Share 4:00pm Upward Practice 6:30pm Pastor's Bible Study | 24 1:00pm Staff Meeting 4:00pm Upward Practice | 25 1:00pm Prayer/Bible Study 1:30pm Pastor John's Bible Study 4:00pm Upward Practice 5:15pm Mentored HandBells 5:45pm Won. Wed. Meal 6:30pm Won. Wed. Classes 8:00pm Choir Practice | 26 8:00am Seekers 4:00pm Upward Practice 6:30pm Men's Fraternity 2 7:00pm Praise Team Practice | 27 9:30am Linda Smith's Bible Study 1:00pm Girl Scouts 4:00pm Upward Practice | 28 9:00am Upward Games |
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