

St. Luke's United Methodist Church

700 Southway Blvd East
Kokomo, In. 46902
765-453-0555

John Walls, Senior Pastor

September 2009

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

It has now been two months since our arrival, and we are having a great time serving the St. Luke's church! As we are continuing the transition, I'm still trying to learn how the various committees and departments carry out their particular ministries and I know that many of you are still trying to become acclimated to my pastoral leadership. I have heard some questions, in particular, about how we are going to observe communion and I want to use my newsletter to address this question.

I would prefer to offer holy communion on a quarterly basis, with two additional opportunities during Christmas Eve and Maundy Thursday—hence, six times a year. The reasons I prefer this schedule follow:

- 1) I preach series of sermons, on various themes, and this generally allows me to preach through a series without interrupting the theme to plan a communion service.
- 2) When we offer holy communion, I believe the entire service should point to the meaning of communion (Songs, Act of Praise, Scripture, Message). The exception to this is when we offer communion at the Christmas Eve service, which focuses on the birth, rather than the death, of Christ.
- 3) Holy Communion is a cherished tradition in the Christian church, and I want it to always be "special" and never "routine."

Having said this, I know there are arguments *pro and con* about the frequency of communion (throughout Christendom), and experience has taught me that this is one subject where we will never have unanimous agreement across the general church or even in most local churches. The main thing for us to focus on is *the meaning* and not *the method*. When we do this, the ONE we are celebrating shows up and blesses us with His presence.

If there are those in our congregation who would like to receive communion more often, Livy Downey is available to bring it to your home or she will offer it the first Sunday of each month, in her office, at the beginning of the Sunday School hour (with the exception of our quarterly communion services). We are planning our next communion service on *Worldwide Communion Sunday*, October 4th. Come hungry, and let's meet at the table.

Onward and Upward!

Pastor John Walls

SURGERIES? Up-coming Hospital procedures? Please let us know the who/what/where/ so that each Saint is lovingly covered in prayer. Please call Livy Downey at home, 765-627-8040, cell, 765-432-1782, work, 765-453-0555.

Gospel Echoes

Jim's Jottings

September 2009

Did you ever stop to consider all of your first loves? There's the ever popular "mom" who, is our natural first love as a baby/child. Then we have our first "puppy love". Susie, the cute blond who sat across the aisle in English class. Or, that athletic guy that runs so fast to catch a fly ball at the baseball game. Next, comes love of job, a fast car, a...a well, you understand my thinking. We cannot deny these passing first loves. Of course the eventual love-of-our-life whom we marry does not come under the category of passing "first loves". With our marriage partner we are expressing a more "mature" form of love.

Having arrived at, shall we say, a more mature age, I look back at some of my "first loves" with a different perspective. I can rank their value now looking in the rearview mirror of life's experiences. I am now able to compare one with another to see which ones have held up over time. The "fast cars" have rusted out (literally) and are no longer mine. The "dreamy" girls I saw across the school yard are now someone else's wife and I have my true dream girl at home. A better perspective is now mine.

I, like the writer of many Biblical proverbs, searched for how to understand the difference between what seems correct at first look with what endures over time. The writer of Proverbs 4:7 confesses, "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." We know from reading many Biblical proverbs that the writer(s) write a factual picture of successes and failures over their lifetime. Some writers seemed to have learned from their mistakes while others did not.

Pastor John has already made the statement multiple times: "God choices generally mean good results, poor choices generally mean poor results" The people around us who have nothing to do with God may seem to have made a good choice. They may seem to be happy and successful, prosperous and without trials. However, as I have watched the daily local and national news shows, periodically read a local paper I have seen seemingly well adjusted and successful persons end up on the other side of the law for various reasons. Or worse I have seen persons reported to be well respected in their community exposed for having led a perverted lifestyle. What did Jesus have to say about making right judgments? First, I believe he wanted every person to not be a person of darkness. In Matthew 6:23 Jesus is quoted to say: "But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness, how great is that darkness!" He seems to be saying that we should first determine if our "eye" i.e.; -our center of judgment and spirituality- should have God at that center. The writer of 1 John 1:5 tells us; "This is the message which we have heard from Him, and declare to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." So then where should we start when we choose our "first loves"? I believe the whole of the scriptures would tell us that to be successful in choosing other "first loves" we should choose Christ as our personal savior and be our first "first love". If He, Christ, should remain our "first love" all of our lives how much better will our judgments be about any other new "first loves".

All references to a Biblical record are taken from the Thompson Chain reference, third improved edition, ©1957 Kirkbride Bible Co, Inc. Indianapolis, Indiana, U.S.A.

I AM CURRENTLY in the process of updating the History cabinet and have found that we are lacking pictures from the recent past. If you have any that I can copy, please let me know. Identifications and dates would be **EXTREMELY** helpful. Starting 01/01/2010, I would like a couple of pictures from ANY church event. Again, name and dates! If you have any historical material to donate, please call me at 455-2988. Alice Richey

ON OCTOBER 10, 1959, DALE AND NANCY SLAUBAUGH began their life journey together. Their children would like to invite the congregation to a 50th anniversary open house. It will be held at Primrose Retirement Community, 329 W. Rainbow Dr, Kokomo on October 10th from 2:00 pm until 5:00 pm. No gifts please.

ST. LUKE'S NEWS YOU CAN USE....

HOPE CIRCLE will meet on September 1st at 1:00 pm in the church parlor. Joan Kellar will do the calling, Lydia Burns will give devotions, Cindi Myers will present the program, Macon Dale Traxler will serve refreshments. We will also pack health kits for September 28th Fall District meeting. Our "special word" for this month is "Fruitful" "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season." Psalm 1:3

NAOMI CIRCLE will meet on Tuesday, September 1st, at 7pm at the home of Rhoda Barkman. Judy Cotterman will present the lesson. Any woman is welcome to attend. Call Rhoda if you need directions.

U.M. Men's breakfast will meet on September 12, at 8:00 am. Stephen Braustetter, Minister of Music and Youth Director at Bethel, will bring us a music ministry. Women are invited!

While the adults are participating in the ALPHA BIBLE STUDY, the kids will participate in: MARKETPLACE 29 A.D. in the Marketplace, children are transported, in a sense, back to Bible lands and times. We'll learn some of the Jewish customs that Mary taught Jesus! Every week, we will make baskets, pottery, and other Bible time crafts. There will also be time for the older children to participate in the Children's Bell Choir.

THANK YOU to all who sent condolences by phone or cards at the loss of my brother, please know they were greatly appreciated. Thank you so much. Barb and Joe Lewis

THANKSGIVING AND GRATITUDE to the lovely Hope Circle ladies who helped make my daughter Annie's wedding reception a beautiful success. If it were not for their unconditional love, donation of cookies and hard work in preparation and clean up it could not have been completed. Thank you for your grace-filled love, especially Macon Dale Traxler, Mary Miner, Joan Kellar, Fannie Rody, and Connie Motz. A donation has been made to St. Luke's Food Pantry in Hope Circle's honor!

THANK YOU TO OUR CHURCH FAMILY for the prayers, sympathy cards and to those who came to the funeral home to pay respects for Dennis' mother, Elizabeth Preiser. In Christian love, Dennis, Sharon, Sandi and Susie Preiser.

THANK YOU St. Luke's Family for your cards, phone calls, and prayers for Chip's eye surgery. A Big Thanks to Pastor Jim for being with my family during my surgery. St. Luke's is a church of love. God bless, Chip and Ginny Holder.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR A NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL

STARTING SEPTEMBER 20TH!!

"MEN ARE LIKE WAFFLES/
WOMEN ARE LIKE SPAGHETTI"

taught by Melinda Walls

What??? No, this isn't a cooking class. Men process their lives in boxes much like a waffle – only one box open at a time. For a man, there's a work box, family box, hobby box, and so on. While women process much like a big plate of spaghetti – every emotion & event touches and relates to every other emotion & event. In this class, you'll gain insight into your spouse and develop skills that will make you glad that men are like waffles & women are like spaghetti.

ONE DAY ONLY! Ladies and Gentlemen: Plan to help make noodles for the bazaar. September 8th, the Tuesday, after Labor Day, we will work from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. Please plan to work an hour or two or more! Lunch and supper will be provided. Another way you can help...put \$5.00 in an offering envelope with your name and label it "Noodles", that will purchase the ingredients for a noodle kit. Or you can donate the ingredients. If you have a noodle machine that you would loan for the day, contact Beth Davis at 457-3011 or Glenda at 453-1860.

JOY FELLOWSHIP will meet on Friday, September 4th, at 11:00 am at the church. It will be our "Back to School" party. Sonnie Neal and Mary Ellen Harnish, retired teachers, will team-teach for this special day. Bring a school picture to share, a dollar for your lunch money, and a bingo prize.

JOY FELLOWSHIP will meet on Friday, September 18th at 11:00 am at the church. Samaritan Caregivers will present the program. Following the meeting, we'll have a carry-in lunch Ham Salad will be provided for lunch. Please bring a covered dish, a bingo prize, and a friend!

Greetings,

I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of the upcoming winter and the need for snow shoveling. I personally do not look forward to the winter yet with the weather finally starting to become reasonable again, but I thought I would get a jump on things and promote the youth snow shoveling service. This is a free service that does not accept donations, and it is intended for those who have a difficult time shoveling snow. Priority is given to St. Luke's attendees, but other individuals may also receive service. In the past two years we have been able to cover up to 5 houses each time it snowed, and that is the plan this year unless we can get some help.

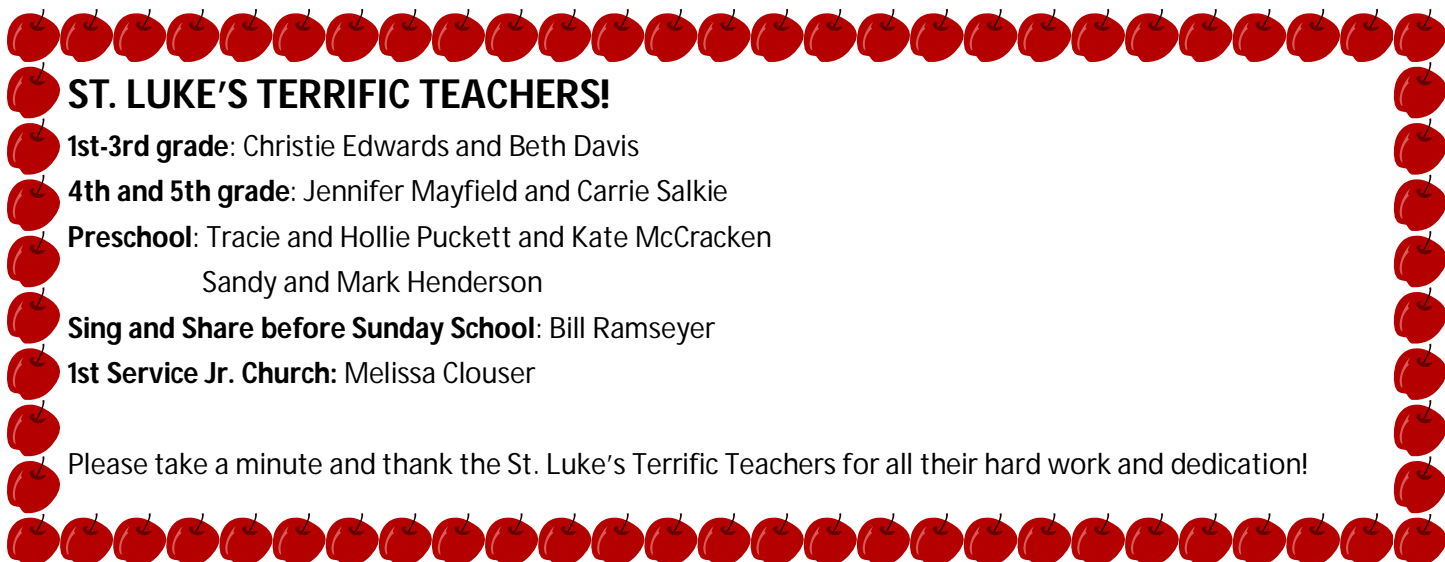
I am interested in expanding this ministry through others in the church who would be interested in helping out. Primarily I would need at least one more adult with motivation, about two hours of freedom to shovel when needed, and a vehicle capable of handling poor winter weather. The adult would be called upon to either complete the job with two or three youth or alone if sufficient youth cannot be rallied at a given time. If you are interested in serving in this ministry please let me know in the next month or two, as you will also need to complete the child protection training course "Safe Sanctuaries" if you have not yet done so. You will also be able to receive reimbursement for mileage driven.

If you are interested in receiving service or giving it you will also want to know that the service typically includes: Shoveling snow from the driveway and walkway, spreading "safer than salt" before a storm or after shoveling as a preventative measure, and possibly using sand in necessary areas for traction. We go from one house to the next as quickly as possible and usually have been able to accomplish the task when the youth get out of school around 3:00pm, though I or a separate adult could accomplish the task sooner, and youth may be able to help earlier on days when school is cancelled. Our group is quick, efficient, and we hope to serve as many as we can this year. Look for more information about how you can sign up for this service in the following newsletters and at Joy Fellowship meetings starting in a couple months.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Jim Wilson



ST. LUKE'S TERRIFIC TEACHERS!

1st-3rd grade: Christie Edwards and Beth Davis

4th and 5th grade: Jennifer Mayfield and Carrie Salkie

Preschool: Tracie and Hollie Puckett and Kate McCracken
Sandy and Mark Henderson

Sing and Share before Sunday School: Bill Ramseyer

1st Service Jr. Church: Melissa Clouser

Please take a minute and thank the St. Luke's Terrific Teachers for all their hard work and dedication!

September '09 Parish Nurse News! Prayer? Does it "work"?

By Cindi Myers RN

A remarkable shift has occurred in the past decade. Books by prominent doctors such as Larry Dossey, Herbert Benson, Harold Koenig and Bernie Siegel have climbed the bestseller charts, touting scientific studies that prove the relation between prayer and physical healing. Seventy medical schools with prestigious Duke and Harvard at the forefront now offer courses examining the role of spirituality in health.

The change in attitude came about because for the first time researchers applied the research techniques of double-blind studies to measure the effect of prayer on health. Volunteers agreed to pray for one set of patients but not another, with neither patient nor medical staff knowing who was being prayed for. To the astonishment of medical researchers, one study after another indicated that even anonymous prayers organized for an experiment have an effect. In one famous study, volunteers prayed for 1/2 of 393 heart attack patients at San Francisco hospital. Among the group prayed for, significantly fewer died, most had a faster recovery requiring the use of fewer potent drugs, and none had to be put on life support.

Dr. Harold G. Koenig, a psychiatrist who directs Duke University's Center for the Study of Religion/Spirituality and Health, reports on many of these findings in the book: THE HEALING POWER OF FAITH.

Selected chapter titles alone signal his conclusions:

- Religious People Have Stronger Marriages and Families
- Religious People Have Healthier Lifestyles
- Religious People Cope Well with Stress
- Religion Offers Protection from Depression and Helps Those Afflicted to Recover Quickly
- Religious People Live Longer, Healthier Lives

Koenig acknowledges that many of these results show the overall effect of religion on health rather than the specific impact of prayer. Lifestyle choices do account for much of the benefit: regular churchgoers smoke less, drink less alcohol, engage in less promiscuous sex and drug use, and have a supportive community to rely on to cope with all of life's problems.

Yet, prayer can indeed help a person cope with stress and have a greater sense of well-being, more hope, and a readiness to forgive, all of which affect health in positive ways. Machines that monitor brain waves, breathing, heart rate, and blood chemistry record dramatic changes when a person prays.

How we think, feel, does have a direct effect on bodily health because the mind regulates the body's natural healing systems. People who take quiet times during the day force themselves to relax and learn to concentrate on ONE, and also learn to control stress that fosters health. A sense of gratitude calms the heart. We are still learning how the brain accomplishes these feats, in part by producing endorphins that control pain and alter body chemistry.

If you have never really done much "praying" before, it's never too late. If you have tried it in the past, and felt like nothing has happened, your "prayers" just bounced off the ceiling, invite the ONE who loves you and is waiting, to teach you. Even your curiosity and hunger to learn to pray is a form of a prayer. Any habit, learning to ride a bike, to golf, knit, takes time...so does prayer. What could you lose?

We are blessed at St. Luke's to have a wonderful Prayer Pastor, Livy Downey, and her e-prayer team. There are also several prayer groups that meet weekly. I want to personally invite you to the Wednesday at 1pm prayer group that lifts the prayers of St. Luke's as well as for each other. If you have any questions just ask Macon Traxler, Martha Bollet, Connie Motz or Cindi Myers. We would love to have you!

Information gleaned from: Prayer: Does it Make any Difference? Philip Yancey page 251+



St. Luke's Vitals for the Month of
August



ATTENDANCE

08/02/2009
8:30 173
11:00 78
Total: 251

08/9/2009
8:30 178
11:00 96
Total: 274

08/16/2009
8:30 193
11:00 97
Total: 290

08/23/2009
8:30 199
11:00 84
Total: 283

08/30/2009
8:30 183
11:00 100
Total: 283

August Attendance
1381

OFFERING

08/02/2009
\$13,750.31

08/09/2009
\$9,629.20

08/16/2009
\$8,282.00

08/23/2009
\$6,516.31

08/30/2009
\$8,931.62

Total AUGUST Offering
\$47,109.44

Needed this Month
\$54,012.90

Difference
(\$6,903.46)

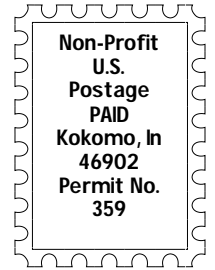


Hayley MILLS, Kyle HILTNER, Sarah MANUEL, (1); Julie WALL, Cheryl GUYER, Carrie SALKIE, (3); Rick WILLIAMS, (4); Thelma RILEY, Julia HUNTZINGER, (7); Lou VOSTATEK, Debbie CO-ADY, Dana HUNTZINGER, Eleanor BEARD (8); Alaina LOTT, (10); Melissa BEARD, Paul THIEDE, (11); Brenda LUTRELL, Jean ROMACK, (12); Dale SLAUBAUGH, Kevin MILLER, Betty THIEDE, Kimberly MILLER, (13); Elizabeth BELL, Fred OYLER, Helen WRIGHT, (14); Judy MILLS-SCOTT, Jared HOUSEHOLDER, Aislynn SALINAS, (16); Alan FLOWERS, Brian DAVIS, Tiffani COLLINS, (17); Joe LANDIS, Bill ROSA, Tanya SAUL, (18); Amy EDWARDS, (19); Eloise BROWN, Grant RICHMOND, Tiffany PARR, Abbe GIBSON, (20); David MILLER, (21); Bonnie HARRIS, (22); Mike GROHMAN, (23); Cecil ROBERTS, Angel MOORE, (25); Rebecca SHULTZ, Matt MAURER, (27); Patty CO-HEE, Melynda HALL, Simara McCracken, (29); Marianne MULKEY, Bailey SPENCER, (30).

Happy Birthday to you!



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John L. Walls, Senior Pastor



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

OFFICE NEWS

TUESDAYS in September

September 1
September 8
September 15
September 22
September 29

On Tuesdays I need a volunteer from 9:00 am until 12:00 pm to answer phones and sit in the church office while I am away at our weekly Staff Meeting.

FRIDAYS in September

September 4
September 11
September 18
September 25

On Fridays I need a volunteer to stuff the bulletins from 1:00 pm until they are finished.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS THE 20TH OF EACH MONTH.



BULLETIN DEADLINES ARE THE THURSDAY OF THE WEEK AT 8:00 AM.

Please stick to the above deadlines.