

Special points of interest:

- James Darnell Life Update
- Vision & Ministry Council (VMC)
- Pastor Nominating/Search Committee
- Spring Group and Bake Sale

May 2008

New Directions Goes Quarterly

Dateline:
Bloomington

The Council approved a trial period to try mailing the New Directions newsletter on a quarterly basis (June, Sept, Dec and March).

We will continue to provide details of upcoming events in the worship bulletins and also will keep our website (www.stlukeunion.org) up to date.



Council will reassess the idea in the fall.

So let us know what you think!

Church Women United

May Friendship Day sponsored by Church Women United will be celebrated on Friday, May 2nd at 9:00 a.m. with a continental brunch at Wesley United Methodist Church, 502 East Front St., Bloomington.

Tickets are \$2.00 each.

Please see Karin Hunt for more information.

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James Darnell Life Update

Greetings Friends,

I wanted to give you all an update on my current goings on.

My second semester at Pacific School of Religion is winding down with about six weeks to go.

This summer I'll be back in Washington, DC interning for The Interfaith Alliance national office.

I'll be working with their development team from June to August.

I am very excited to be back in DC, which really is home now.

My in-care (ordination process) status remains at The United Church + Die Vereinigte Kirche in DC, and can't wait to be back with my church family there.

I've been accepted as a Minister in Training at Sycamore Congregational United Church of Christ in El Cerrito, CA for my field education for the next academic year.

The congregation is a Japanese-English bilingual congregation, led by Rev. Sharon MacArthur (who is the current moderator of the UCC Executive Council).

I look forward to my time with the congregation; I think it will be a great learning experience.

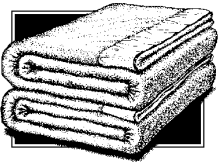
I'll be assisting with preaching, liturgy, Christian education, evangelism, arts, and young adult ministry.

I hope all is well with you and yours.

Shalom/Friede,

James

Blanket Sunday



The first Sunday in May is celebrated as Blanket Sunday in many churches in Illinois.

You will find special envelopes in the pews.

\$5.00 will buy a new serviceable blanket which will be distributed in the U.S. or worldwide.

Make checks to St. Luke Union Church and indicate

it is for "Blankets."

Thank you.

Thank You

I would like to thank everyone who sent cards and flowers, visited me, and prayed for me during my recovery from hip replacement surgery.

I appreciate all of you!

Thank you!

Ruth Pittmon



Christian Education



I can hardly believe that summer is almost here!

What a great year it has been.

I learn so much more than I teach in Christian Education - it is truly a blessing!

See the CE page in this issue for details on the studies taking place for all ages here at St. Luke Union.

May 18 is Confirmation Sunday.

Adam Moret and Nate Harroun are both being confirmed.

Be sure to be here to welcome them!

A breakfast will be served at 8:30 that morning for Adam and Nate, their families, the Vision and Ministry Council, and the confirmation leaders.

SNAC will have their last outing of the school year on May 18.

We will go to Grady's for miniature golf, fun, and pizza.

Look for details.

During the summer, the youth will meet on the 1st

and 3rd Sundays of the month for fellowship activities.

Mark your calendars for June 8-12 for our VBS program - **Power Lab**.

Amie Keeton is our director and will be contacting possible volunteers in the next few weeks.

Please consider prayerfully how you might use your gifts to help make this a great experience.

We want to honor our high school and college graduates this spring.

To be sure that we don't miss anyone, please contact the church office with the names of anyone who is graduating.

We have purchased a Bible Commentary series by Tom Wright entitled *The Gospel for Everyone*.

It is a great tool for anyone who would like more information on a passage in one of the gospels.

Tom is the Bishop of Durham in the Church of England, and a noted New Testament scholar.

He was named by Christianity Today as one

of the top five theologians in the world.

These commentaries are written in everyday language and are easy to understand.

They will be kept on the bookshelf in the outer office.

Please feel free to use them, as well as any of the other resources we have.

Disney's *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian* will be out in theatres May 16th.

I would love to get a group of us (kids and adults) together to go see the movie and then have discussion/dessert afterwards.

Let me know if you are interested and I'll continue the event.

Kathy Otto

You've Gotta Eat!!!

Did you know that May is National Barbecue Month?

provide the barbecue and buns.

For those unable to bring a dish to pass, the dinner will cost \$4.00.

Did you know that it is also National Hamburger Month, National Strawberry Month, and National Chocolate Custard Month?



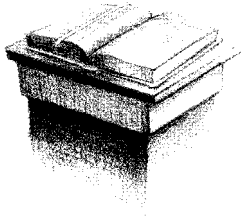
In celebration of National Barbecue Month, we will be having barbecue sandwiches.

If you would like to bring a dish to pass or anything to go with the "Theme," please feel free to do so.

Thursday, May 8th at 5:00 p.m., we will be having our monthly "Theme" dinner. Agape Committee will

Home Bible Class

Study ^{the Bible} with us



The Home Bible Class will meet on Thursday, May 8th at 1:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

"God's Extravagant Grace."

Hostess will be Norma Scott.

The study will be from our study guide *Above and Beyond*, Lesson #5 entitled

Thank You

Thanks so much to my church family for all your prayers, calls and concerns before, during, and after my hip surgery.

Her prayers helped so much during the "uncertain moments" prior to surgery.

Vi Fenstermaker

And a special THANKS to Pastor Beth for the visits while I was in the hospital.



Christian Education Opportunities

SUNDAY MORNINGS - 9:00 a.m.

May 4: PCUSA/UCC Information Session
 Regular Study: Disciples of Jesus

Bible Study
 For All Ages

SMALL GROUP STUDY DURING THE WEEK:

"Tex Mix"

Wednesday evenings 5:30 - 8:00

Dinner 5:30

Worship 6:30

Bible Study 7:00



FOR:

JR. HIGH & SR. HIGH

E-Merge

Games and fun 4:30-5:15

Bible study 5:15-6:00

Dinner 6:00-6:45

Worship 6:45-7:00

May 18 - Last regular SNAC meeting until fall - outing at Grady's!

Fellowship activities 1st and 3rd Sundays during summer.

Date	Poppies Preschoolers	Daisy K- 2 grade	Sunflower 3-5 grade
May 4	Welcome to a Pentecost Session		
May 11	Sharing about Pentecost		
May 18	God Loves You!		
	See you at VBS		
	And in the fall		

PowerXPress



Moderator's Minutes

In our April meeting, Pastor Beth introduced a UCC program called "Ready, Set, Grow".

We look forward to learning more about this approach to congregational growth.

The key point is that growth does not usually happen with planning ("Ready"), and putting certain preparations in place to prepare for and to deal with the consequences of growth ("Set").

We briefly discussed the fact that "growth" can take several forms - not just "more members".

We can grow in faith; we can grow in service; we can grow in our relationship with God.

In fact, one or more of these may be necessary *before* we can expect to grow in numbers.



Beth introduced the results of some research about our community and about St. Luke Union Church.

Although we instinctively feel we need to attract "young families," that may not be the best approach for us.

We might be better off attracting the children of the Baby Boomers.

For most of us, that means people the age of our own

children - people whose children may be in college.

The Vision and Ministry Council is excited to learn more about these "different" approaches to growth.

Pray for us as we learn new ways to lead St. Luke Union Church into the 21st century - and beyond!

Rod Hawkins

Moderator, Vision and Ministry Council

One Great Hour of Sharing

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering total as of April 19th is \$1,308.15. Thanks to all of you who have donated to this special offering.

If you still wish to donate, either write "OGHS" on

the note portion of a check or place it in a special pew envelope and indicate it is for OGHS.



Money Matters As of March 31, 2008



GENERAL FUND	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Receipts	\$56,937	\$60,445
Disbursements	\$50,146	\$59,304
5 YEAR CAPITAL CAMPAIGN	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Receipts	\$5,197	\$8,950

Giving for both the General fund and the 5 Year Capital Campaign are below pledge amounts. More detailed financial information is available on the Details Board.

Thank You

I would like to thank everyone at St. Luke Union Church who sent cards, visited me, and prayed for me during my recent surgery and illness.

I would also like to thank those of you that helped

out in the office with New Directions and Worship Bulletins during my absence.

Thank you all so much for everything.

Jessie



Vision and Ministry Council (VMC)

Vision and Ministry Council Highlights from the April Meeting:

- Approved the Child Protection Policy presented by the Personnel Committee.
- Approved on a trial basis to try a quarterly newsletter beginning in June. This will free up time to update the church database and to complete other

projects. Announcements will be increased in the Worship folder and the website will be updated regularly.

- The church audit is complete and will be presented at the May meeting.
- The church constitution is in the final draft pending the auditor's report.

- Reviewed the Women's Fellowship By-laws.
- Received draft of the Mission Study Report from the Mission Study Taskforce.

Karlene Bledsoe
Clerk
Vision & Ministry Council

Pastor Nominating/Search Committee

On April 7th, the first meeting of the Pastor Nominating/Search Committee was held.

At our meeting we elected our officers: Charlene Beringer as Chairperson, Matthew Kubiak and Brian Trower as Co-Vice Chairpersons, and Margaret Hawkins as Secretary.

Many items were actually accomplished before our first meeting.

Many people have been working “behind the scenes” getting tasks completed so the Committee can present items to the Congregation, as appropriate.

We will be working closely with our Personnel Committee regarding financial compensation for our new pastor as well as a Position Description for the new pastor.



We will compile the results of the survey and report these expectations to the UCC and Presbytery.

This will aid them in the selection of potential candidates for our congregation.

We will be meeting in May to go over the results of the Leadership Expectations Survey and begin writing our Church Information Forms for the Presbyterian and UCC denominations.

Please continue to keep the Committee in your prayers as we continue in the journey to find our new pastor.

Charlene A. Beringer,
Chairperson

An important part of helping in the selection of a new pastor is the Leadership Expectations Survey that was mailed to you in April.

Each person in the congregation should have completed a survey in order to help us determine what the most important aspects of ministry are for our church at this time.

The information we receive from the congregation is vital to the search for a new pastor.

What Are Our Denominations Saying?

Learn about the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church (USA).

What do our

denominations believe, how do we govern ourselves, what are the current issues that are being discussed within our larger bodies.

Join us May 4th during the 9:00 a.m. Sunday School Class.

May Birthdays

Ramona Spears - 1
 Barbara Stille - 1
 Joy Hippensteele - 2
 Adam Moret - 2
 Jacque Hawkins - 4
 Megan Paterson - 4
 Andy Kubiak - 5
 Michelle Nuttall - 5
 Matt Wright - 5
 Jay Hammer - 6
 Jim Wagner - 7
 Doug Ferrier - 11
 Heather Paterson - 11



David Trower - 12
 Josh Koopman - 14
 Sanae Ferrier - 24
 Harvey Wells - 24
 Lynn Warner - 26

Emma Stille - 28
 Talia Claucherty - 31
 Penny Kellogg - 31
 Gary Weirman - 31

May Anniversaries

Sam and Ruth Pittmon	May 13
David and Jennifer Claucherty	May 20
Brent and Jan Paterson	May 25
John and Sue Boerner	May 26

Carpet Update

The installation is complete of the new carpeting and flooring in the sanctuary, fellowship hall, vestibule, and outer office.

The expenditure was financed by donations and the Capital Improvements Fund, specifically:

Designated donations	\$15,892.00
Designated memorials	\$ 1,200.00
Capital improvements fund	<u>\$25,276.00</u>
Total	\$42,368.00

The new flooring makes such a difference. Thank you for your donations!

Your Help is Needed!

We are the host church for the Illinois Conference United Church of Christ Annual Meeting, June 5-7 at the Doubletree Hotel.

We need help all three days. Shifts are generally 3 to 4 hours and include things like helping at the registration desk, hospitality room, or ushering.

A sign-up sheet is located on the welcome desk. Sign up with a friend!

Thank you,
Pastor Beth

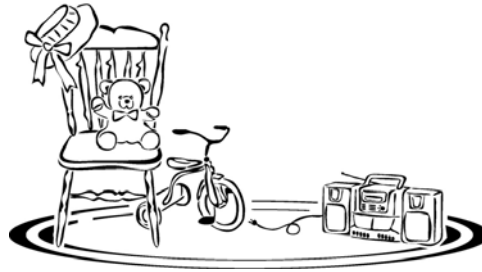
Spring Group and Bake Sale

Thanks to all of you our Spring Group and Bake Sale was another rousing success.

We made a record breaking \$3,521.62

In addition to providing the community with reasonably-priced merchandise, we gave items to:

- Chestnut Health Systems - Material for pillows for their clients
- Community Health Care Clinic - Nebulizer
- Lincoln Correctional Center for Women - Items for inmates
- Home Sweet Home Mission Mart - Two pick up trucks full
- McLean County Humane Society - Towels
- Operation Paper Back - Books for troops
- Recycling Furniture for Families - Dishes, linens, lamp, table, baby items
- Regional Office of Education - Gowns for GED graduation ceremonies
- Salvation Army Thrift Store - Pick up truck full
- WGLT - Records
- YMCA's Stepping Stones Program – Women's clothing



We supported our environmental mission by recycling cardboard and wire hangers.

Thank you for donating baked goods and merchandise.

Thank you for putting your items on the tables.

Thank you for working before, during, and after the sale.

Thank you for buying merchandise.

Charlene Beringer
and *Terry Small*
Group Sale Coordinators

Pentecost Feast

We will be celebrating Pentecost on Sunday, May 11th with a "Feast".

In addition to donuts, coffee and juice, we will also be serving cake during Fellowship Hour.

Please join us for cake and Fellowship and don't forget to wear red!!

Agape Committee

Blessings from Pastor Beth

When we began this interim journey together in February of 2007, I remember writing that I saw our journey as two paths . . . traveling together and that I thought we would journey until one of the paths turned and then we would part.

Early this year, I began to feel God calling me to look at a new path.

I must admit I was not sure that I wanted to go on a new path, but through faithful discernment I began to see that I was slowing moving in different directions already.

When I was approached to consider talking with a church looking for an Interim Pastor at Hope Presbyterian Church in Springfield, I knew that the time had come to acknowledge that my time with you all was indeed coming to an end.

I began to look at what it would mean to begin a new relationship with another congregation.

I must admit I found it very exciting.

I then knew it was time to move down a different



path.

I have been blessed to be in this relationship.

I came as a new Associate fresh out of seminary. You ordained me and have been instrumental in forming my understanding of pastor.

When the reality of clergy misconduct showed up in our church, you gave me an opportunity to discover gifts and abilities I did not know I had.

I am extremely grateful that you held on and trusted the Holy Spirit to move and guide us forward.

Then we challenged the Presbytery to consider a new relationship, one of Interim, you embraced it and cared enough to help me get training in that field.

I cannot say enough what that means, because it also turned out to be a new sense of profession for me.

And now it is time to say goodbye and to celebrate our ministry together.

I do so want to celebrate the relationships we have formed, the experiences we have shared, both good and bad, and to celebrate the fact that our gracious God stayed with us through thick and thin, just as God has always promised.

We have much to celebrate, so let the party begin!

Blessings,

Pastor Beth

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