

## Eighty Years And Still Ministering

How many remember what they were doing 80 years ago? What a silly question, many of us were not present 80 years ago and therefore cannot remember anything. Well, there is at least one group whose ministry continues to be strong here at St. Luke Union Church after 80 years.

On April 11th, 1929 (a year remembered for an event in October of that year), the **Home Bible Class** became a part of the ministry and mission of what was then Friedens Evangelical and Reformed Church. With the formation of the United Church of Christ and the joining together with Union Presbyterian Church it has left its mark on its members and those its mission efforts have touched.

It has continued all these years to study the Word and to represent the Gospel with its financial support of worthy mission projects and its assistance of those in need. Without interruption, with the same name, only the names of the members have changed and the 'membership' offering has increased a little. Quite an accomplishment, eighty years of uninterrupted proclamation of the Word of God. Many congregations have folded in that time, and ministers would have received their 'Honored Minister' pins and retired. They are disciples of Christ on a mission. Can you name a charter member; are you related to a charter member?

It is with pleasure that the **Home Bible Class** invites its members and former members on April 9th at 1:30 p.m. (to celebrate this milestone). Coffee, cake and memories will be a part of the celebration, as will a lesson in our current study on Luke.

To the **Home Bible Study Class** a heartfelt thank you for all those years of exemplary examples of discipleship.

### In faith we are praying for:

Laurie Vial  
 Judy Norton  
 Kris Muschel  
 Mark Redick  
 Craig Hammer  
 David Marquardt  
 Seanna Moyer  
 Sharon Stanford  
 Mary Jane Trower  
 Marsha Hinthorn  
 Bob Thomas  
 Mary Desmond  
 Evelyne Thomas  
 Pierre Roussey  
 Doris McFarland  
 Ed Desmond Family  
 Rev. M. Karen Licklyter-Klein  
 Erwin Manzke  
 Lynn Au & Family  
 Kerry Modendricker  
 Walt Sohrt  
 Lois Martin  
 Harry Fisher  
 Ron Blankenship  
 Maryville, IL First Baptist Church  
 Mike & Kay Essig  
 George, Neal and Claire Benjamin  
 Rev. William Riegle  
 Rev. Betty Homback  
 Sue Moore  
 Ryan Palesh  
 Leo Rennhack  
 Luke Slusarksi  
 Charlie Miller

## Pastor Bob Ponders . . .

“ . . . Cum caritate et luce Dei . . . “ What a way to start what is an Easter Pastoral Letter. What can we do with an incomplete Latin expression? Just what does it mean? It has something to do with God. “ . . . With the love and light of God . . . ” That is an Easter message for those with ears to hear and eyes to see, if I ever heard one.

Easter happens only with the love of God and with God’s light shining into a world unable to grasp that God’s will works for the good and therefore wins. As I noted in a recent sermon, we need to be Pentecostal people, but what I left unsaid, at least explicitly, was that we cannot be a Pentecostal people without recognizing the truth of Easter - the tomb must truly be empty.

As Clark Williamson, a liberal post-Holocaust process theologian notes, whether one is liberal or conservative, fundamentalist or progressive, all must truly be aware that something different happened to make Easter, Easter. On Good Friday, Jesus says, “It is finished!” (according to John).

Because Good Friday finished it, God can say on Easter morning, “Let there be Light anew . . .” And there was light. Pay close attention to the Gospels. God’s creation is remade. As Jesus challenged Nicodemus, in the dark, we “ . . . Must be born from above (anew) . . . ” in order to be fully members of the new creation (God’s Holy Ground). If Nicodemus is like Good Friday with everyone still in the dark, Easter is like the woman at the well; in the Light, she recognizes the Holy One of God.

Stanley Hauerwas, professor of Theology and Ethics at Duke Divinity makes clear that behavior in the Way will make us aliens in the world. Hauerwas notes that as a Texan, he is fully aware of what it means to be an alien, since he serves the church in the Carolinas. OK, so he makes that note with tongue in cheek, but his point is well taken. The world is not the way to get to the End that leads to new beginnings. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

I hope this Easter message finds you ready to see the light. That’s God, that’s grace. **AMEN.**

Blessings,

*Pastor Bob*

## Thank You

Dear St. Luke Union Family,

Thank you so much for your prayers and kind words during our great niece’s short life. Kaitlyn Weber touched more people’s lives in her 4 1/2 months than many do in a lifetime. There were over 34,000 hits on her caringbridge site. She brought so many people together in prayer, and she and her parents taught us how to be strong, how to love, and how to have faith. As her parents wrote on her caringbridge site, “She is now nestled in the arms of God.” Thank you.

The Desmond Family

## Stewardship

Stewardship - It's not fall; what gives? I wanted to take a few moments to reflect on 2009 and what Stewardship has meant to St. Luke Union, specifically our youth group.

Our junior high and senior high groups meet at Sunday Night After Church from 4:30 to 7:00p.m. We get to spend time together to talk about our highs and lows of the previous week, have some fun as a group, study our lesson plans, and have dinner together. This year has been great; we enjoy spending time with the youth! How does Stewardship fit into this? I think it is easy to think about Stewardship during the fall or even every week during the collection. I think of Stewardship each time our youth group gets together. Your support provides a safe environment for our youth to grow together, go on great bonding experiences - such as Grand Bear Lodge (January 2009), fund our youth study curriculum, and fund a mission trip, to name a few.

We appreciated everyone's support of our Valentines Desert/Tea Tasting a few weeks ago; what a great fundraiser for our youth. Our youth know they are supported by a congregation of generous people. Next time you hear Pastor Bob talk about Stewardship, you can think of our youth group as being one such benefactor of your commitment to St. Luke.

God Bless,

*Dan Staver*

Chair - Stewardship Committee

## Easter Breakfast

A Continental-style Easter Breakfast will be served Sunday, April 12th from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. We will be serving coffee, juice, donuts, muffins and coffee cake. We will also have Easter Eggs.

Please join us for Breakfast and Fellowship on this Blessed morning.

Agape Committee

## Church Women United

The Spring Meeting of Church Women United will be held on Monday, April 20th, starting at 10:00 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 211 North School Street, Normal. Please bring a sack lunch. Dessert and beverages will be provided. Our speaker is Mr. Tom Fulop who will bring us an update on the Safe Harbor building project.

## Group Sale and Bake Sale

Friday, April 17th from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 18th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Are you getting ready for the Group Sale? You still have time to collect kitchen items, children's toys, linens, jewelry, furniture, knick-knacks and spring/summer clothing that you no longer need. All items must be clean and in good condition. Please label all bed linens with the size, as this will be of great assistance to our helpers. You may bring these items to the church on Tuesday April 14<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday April 15<sup>th</sup>. The tables will be marked so you will know where to place the items. Please have all donations to the church by 5:00pm on Wednesday April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Don't forget the Bake Sale. Baked goods need to be at the church by 8:00a each day of the sale so they can be assembled into sale-size portions.

Volunteers are needed from Tuesday to Saturday. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday we will arrange and price items, and on Friday and Saturday we keep everything organized, and after the sale closes at noon on Saturday we box up and deliver all remaining items to local thrift shops. Also needed are volunteers to pick up items from those unable to get their merchandise to the church and vans/pickups to transport items to the thrift shops after the sale.

Sign up sheets will be posted on the bulletin board. Sign up or just show up to help. You will enjoy the fellowship and have a lot of fun.

*Terry Small and Charlene Beringer,*

Group Sale Coordinators

## Pastor Search/Nominating Committee

The Committee continues to receive dossiers/profiles from prospective candidates for our called pastor. As of March 10<sup>th</sup>, we had received 120 dossiers/profiles. The committee continues to read over them, take notes and discuss the candidates. We have also sent requests to several prospective candidates for audio/visual materials so that we may hear/see them and discuss these as well.

We continue to listen to and watch the materials sent to us to aid in our decision-making process.

We are conducting telephone interviews at this time as well.

Please keep the Pastor Search/Nominating Committee in your prayers as we continue in our search for a called pastor.

*Charlene A. Beringer,*

Chairperson

## April 2009 Lectionary

Date	Hebrew	Psalms	Epistle	Gospel
April 5	Isaiah 50:4-9a	Psalms 31:9-16	Philippians 2:5-11	Mark 14:1-15:47 John 12:12-16
April 5		Psalms 118:1-2, 19-29		Mark 11:1-11 John 12:12-16
April 9	Exodus 12:1-4 (5-10, 11-14)	Psalms 116:1-2, 12-19	1 Corinthians 11:23-26	John 13:1-17, 31b-35
April 12	Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:1-9	Psalms 118:14-24	1 Corinthians 15:1-11	John 20:1-18 Mark 16:1-8
April 19	Acts 4:32-35	Psalms 133	1 John 1:1-22	John 20:19-31
April 26	Acts 3:12-19	Psalms 4	1 John 3:1-7	Luke 24:36b-48

## Annual Spring Retreat for Women's Fellowship

The annual spring retreat for St. Luke Union Church's Women's Fellowship will be held at Pilgrim Park the weekend of April 24th to 26th. All women of the church are invited to attend.

This year we will be offering a Bible study from the book entitled, *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World* by Joanna Weaver.

"The life of a woman today isn't really all that different from that of Mary and Martha in the New Testament. Like Mary, you long to sit at the Lord's feet . . . but the daily demands of a busy world just won't leave you alone. Like Martha, you love Jesus and really want to serve him . . . and then Jesus invites you to choose the 'better part' - a joyful life of intimacy with him that flows naturally into loving service."

Are you too busy to attend this retreat? Jesus is inviting you to spend 48 hours away from the demands of everyday busyness. The retreat will include Bible Study discussion, relaxation in a beautiful setting and no high ropes for us! Also included will be foot and hand spa baths, lessons on scrapbooking and stamping, time for a nap, and an afternoon of browsing the downtown shops in Princeton, and great fellowship with other ladies from our church. Friends and sisters are invited to join you too.

Registration sheets and other retreat information can be found in the Fellowship Hall. Contact Ruth Trower and Karlene Bledsoe for further information.

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

### Birthdays

Sue Boerner - 1  
Debbie Harrison - 1  
Joel Keeton - 1  
Emily Desmond - 2  
Pierre Roussey - 2  
Mary Jane Trower - 2  
Kevin Schultz - 3  
Allison Schultz - 4  
Jeff Tarter - 4  
Kari Clark - 6  
Matt Swanson - 6  
Barry Moore - 7  
Beatrice Smith - 8  
Marian Harris - 9  
Delmar Small - 12  
Brian Trower - 12  
Lillie Keeton - 14  
Margaret Bork - 16  
Jackie Belletete - 17  
Emma DeBruine - 17  
Eva Kempin - 17  
Bob Hippensteele - 18  
Cameron Luna - 18  
Lisa DeBruine - 19  
Dan Moret - 19  
Bryan Colee - 21  
Norma Scott - 22  
Nellie LaCroix - 23  
Irene Beich - 24  
Scott Luna - 24  
Lauren Desmond - 26  
Kathy Otto - 28  
Carol Parlette - 28

### Anniversaries

Gilbert & Norma Knapp - 4th  
Paul & Dawn Brown - 7th  
Edward & Debora Gottschalk - 9th  
Frank & Amy Winters - 17th

## Home Bible Class

The Home Bible Class will meet Thursday, April 9th in the Fellowship Hall. The study will be Lesson #3 entitled “Debts Are Forgiven” in our study guide, *Jubilee, Luke’s Gospel for the Poor.* Coffee will be served at 1:30 p.m.

## One Great Hour of Sharing Offering April 5th

“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:21) If you were searching for God’s treasure, you would find it in people, because God treasures all people. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) joins our hearts with God’s by providing aid when natural disasters strike and helping refugees rebuild their lives. OGHS also strengthens struggling communities with basics like education, health care, tools, seeds and water or small loans to provide for those needs.

For 60 years, OGHS has been helping people in over 80 countries, including the United States. OGHS continues to help people recover even after the news media has left the area for other “major” stories.

Our treasure lies in honoring God, doing God’s will, and loving God’s treasured people. Please prayerfully consider contributing generously to the OGHS offering which will be collected and dedicated on April 5th. Special envelopes are included in this newsletter and extra envelopes will be in the pews.

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