

FEBRUARY 2014

MINISTRY STORIES

Reflections.....pg 2-3

OUTREACH

Supplies Needed.....pg 4

Outreach to Children.....pg 4

Upward Needs.....pg 4

Easter Egg-stravaganza.....pg 4

EVENTS

Wednesday.comm.....pg 5

STAFF NOTES

Updates.....pg 6

ACTIVITIES

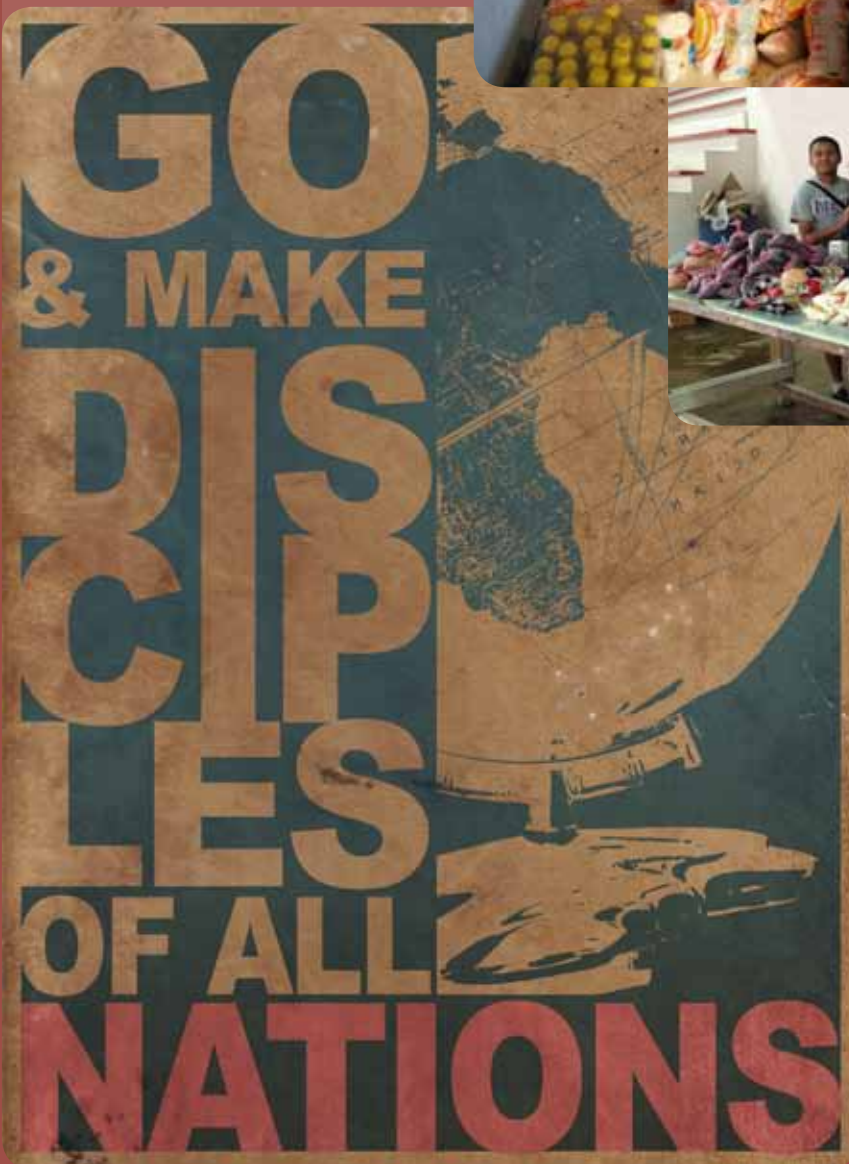
Pictorial Directory.....pg 7

John Wesley Study.....pg 7

UMW.....pg 7

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship Emphasis.....pg 8



Mission Trip to Guatemala

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to go out into the world and be His hands and feet. A wonderful opportunity through GO International to offer help while spreading the Word to the people of Guatemala is being offered through a 10-day mission trip from June 21-July 1. If you are not available to participate in the trip, support the St. Luke team financially by the fund raising activities that will be held leading up to the trip.

St. Luke has an outreach ministry at Richmond Place. The Sunday School class and Tuesday Bible Study Group that has been established is flourishing under the leadership of Jim Eastburn. Jim has a wonderful story to tell:

Gerri, who is 80 years old and lives at Richmond Place, participates in our Sunday School class there and shared a heartwarming story with the class recently. Several weeks ago the lesson led us to a discussion of "loving the unlovely." Gerri shared that she and her brother had not spoken for 43 years. He objected to the person she married and would not speak to her. Our class discussion moved her to take the initiative and call him, which she did last week. To her surprise, he answered the phone and they talked for about 45 minutes. Gerri shared what a blessing that was and how the class discussion had led her to do what she did.

Praise God for the class and for the peace and reconciliation God has brought to Gerri's life through this group!

Nora Conner
Director of Ministries



MINISTRY STORIES

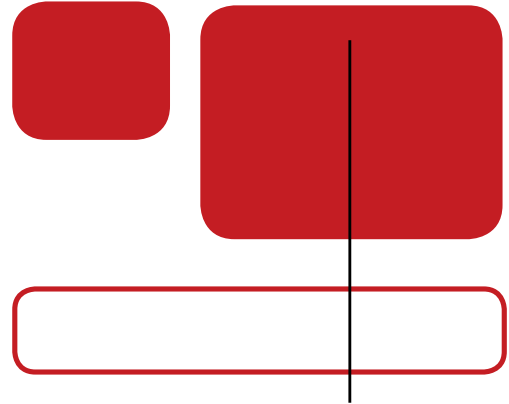
We would like to thank the Keenagers Class once again for their thoughtfulness and generosity in their gifts to the Methodist Children's Home in Versailles. Earl and I delivered the Christmas gifts and the staff was very much pleased. We extend a very special thank you to Kate Taylor who always organizes the gift-giving, as she has done for years past. Thank you, again, for making Christmas much brighter for the children and their families. And may all of you be richly blessed this New Year, as you have blessed so many others.

Earl and Sharlene Brady



Nathaniel Mission Supplies Needed

St. Luke has been able to provide more than a meal when we serve breakfast at Nathaniel Mission the first Sunday of each month. The needs are great and ongoing. Right now warm clothing, socks, toiletries, razors, toothbrushes, toothpaste and individual snack food packages are needed. Donations can be left in the basket at the Connection Center.



St. Luke Reaches Out to Children Through Kids Cafe' and Common Good

There are two opportunities to serve as mentors and tutors through the ministry of the church: Kids Cafe' and Common Good.

Kid's Cafe meets at St. Luke on Tuesdays from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. during the school year for children (primarily K-5) in the community around the church. Volunteers provide tutoring and activities as well as help prepare and serve the children a meal. If interested contact Pam Harned at 278-0096, harnedpa@yahoo.com.

Common Good runs Monday–Thursday from 2:30–6:00 p.m. during the school year. It serves students in grades K-12 from North Lexington neighborhoods and meets at the Epworth Campus of Embrace UMC on North Limestone. They need mentors to commit to volunteering one day a week for the spring semester. Background check and volunteer training is required. If interested, contact Laura Gallaher by phone at 333-5336, commongoodcdc@gmail.com.

Easter Egg-Stravaganza Planning Underway

Our annual Easter Egg-Stravaganza will be held on April 12 in our Life Center. This event attracts many people from our community, and we are striving to make it better every year. You can help! The Children's Ministry Leadership Team is putting together a planning team for this event. Please indicate on your registration card if you would like to serve on this team or contact Susan Cutshall at scutshall@stlukeumc.org.

Upward Needs You

Upward needs three volunteers to assist running the game clock for our game days. Games are 9 a.m., 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. If interested, please contact Ed Towle, etowle@stlukeumc.org, 806-2722. Upward is running every Saturday through March 1.



WEDNESDAY.COMMUNITY



CLASSES ARE UNDERWAY... BUT YOU ARE WELCOME TO JOIN!

Everyone has different schedules, and with that in mind, the evening will start early and end late. The hope is that at least one of these opportunities will fit your schedule as well as your discipleship growth. Details of the adult classes can be found online at www.stlukeumc.org. The meals will be hosted by different groups and classes to raise awareness and support for various causes in our community. Meals are \$5 per plate (sharing is allowed if you wish). Meals will be served from 5:15–6:30 p.m.

5:15–6:30 p.m.
6:00–7:00 p.m.
6:00–7:00 p.m.
6:00–7:00 p.m.

Come-and-Go Community Meal in the Gym

Childcare for Infants and Toddlers

Activities for Preschoolers—Bible learning time

K-5th Graders: “Kaboom! Discovering Who God Is.”

(Through hands-on activities that use children’s curiosity about science, we will explore the character traits of God in a way that will leave lasting impressions on their hearts.)

6:00–7:30 p.m.
6:00–7:30 p.m.
7:00–8:30 p.m.

Youth Bible Study in the Youth Room

Adult Classes (see below)

Adult Choir

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Grace

6:00–7:30 p.m.

Facilitated by Wendell Barnett

The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life

6:00–7:00 p.m.

Facilitated by Bettie Ockerman

The Way: Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus, an Adam Hamilton study

6:30–7:30 p.m.

Facilitated by Kevin Walters

Namesake—When God Rewrites Your Story, a study by Jessica LaGrone

6:00–7:30 p.m.

Facilitated by Beth Tackett

Serving From the Heart

6:15–7:15 p.m.

Facilitated by Dawn Beamish

iPhone for Beginners

6:00–7:00 p.m.

STARTING MARCH 12

Facilitated by Marcia Murphy and Chelsea Kelly

Knitting and Crocheting

6:00–7:00 p.m.

Facilitated by Karla Lhade

Winter Weather Policy

St. Luke's policy is that we will have worship even if it is poor weather. Your personal safety is paramount! If you are not comfortable coming out in the snow, please do not risk your safety.

For Wednesday.comm and Upward activities a decision will be made by 1 p.m. Our website, infoline and local tv stations will post the cancellations. Ministry teams will be notified by the team leader of cancellations for meetings.

Ed Towle
Facilities Manager



Nora Conner
Director of Ministries



Resources AWOL!

Some excellent resources were borrowed from our church's curriculum library several months ago and have not found their way back yet. They are *Forgotten God* (DVD) and *Invitation to the Old Testament* (A Short-Term Disciple Study). If you are using them, that's great! Just let us know. If you are finished with them, please return them so that other groups may utilize them. Materials can be returned to the Connection Center, the church office, or to Nora Conner, and you can contact the church office (269-4687) or Nora (nconner@stlukeumc.org, 489-4547) with information. Thank you!

New to St. Luke? Want to Know More About the Church?

You are invited to join us for our next Orientation Luncheon on Sunday, February 16 at 12:15-3:15 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We will enjoy a specially-prepared lunch and then discuss the mission and ministry of St. Luke. You'll have an opportunity to meet the ministry staff, tour the entire facility and hear about the exciting ministries St. Luke offers in the church and community, as well as learn more about how to get involved and become a member of St. Luke. You may reserve your special place by indicating your intention to attend on your registration card or by contacting the church office, 269-4687, bharris@stlukeumc.org. RSVP as soon as possible. If you would like to become a member of St. Luke you have an opportunity on New Member Sunday, February 23. Contact Pastor Mark at mgirard@stlukeumc.org if you would like to join.

Mark Girard
Senior Pastor





from the *pastor*

We are finally drawing to a conclusion in the formulation of the ministry-focused budget for 2014. It has been a hard but exciting process. Shifting to a ministry-focused budget has added some necessary layers to the budgeting process. Many more people have been involved, than in previous budgeting discussions, which has proven to be a very positive thing.

You need to know that every ministry of the church has undergone a thorough review as to the effectiveness of that ministry in leading us towards our vision of "Jesus Christ In Every Life." The Ministry Directors have been very deliberate and thorough in the process and in developing the programming aspect of the budget. Our Going Forth Team has done a great job of reviewing all of the missionaries and outreach ministries that we support and made some tough choices about ongoing funding as we move through 2014. The Staff Parish Team has taken a hard look at our staff positions and developed their portion of the budget based on what staff positions the church needs to continue to minister in effective ways, as well as grow the ministry. The Trustees, Counseling Ministry and other teams in the church have taken a hard look concerning their funding needs for the coming year. The result was that all of those teams submitted their portion of the budget to the Finance Team for inclusion in a unified ministry budget for the church.

I was so encouraged by the way that the Finance Team received all of that and formulated the final budget to submit to the Servant Leadership Team for final approval. They did a careful analysis of funding trends from previous years and projections for 2014 which were based on the response to the fall stewardship campaign as well as the wonderful record giving that the congregation established in 2013, and approved a budget that will stretch us as a church, but certainly not break us.

The final budget presented to the Servant Leadership Team projects a 4.7% increase in expenditures (and tithes and offerings) for 2014. It should be noted that the bulk of that increase in expenditures is due to the fact that according to the plan adopted when the Life Center was built, two additional mortgage payments will be absorbed into the general budget this year and in future years until the full mortgage is being paid from general funds rather than special funds. If those payments are removed from the calculations, the increase in the ministry budget is less than 2%.

However, in a time when many churches are having to cut their budgets to account for a decline in tithes and offerings received, the action of the Finance Team is a wonderful statement of the faith that they have that God will provide through the generous hearts and lives of all the people at St. Luke. It is also a testimony to the faith of all the people of the church, who during difficult economic times have bucked the trend of declining giving and actually increased giving every year. I left the meeting of the Finance Team last Tuesday praising God that I can be in ministry with a people that are willing to move forward boldly towards the vision of God's church. It is that Spirit that has made St. Luke a great and dynamic church since the first service in the Woodhill Shopping Center many years ago now. You have met every challenge and continued to advance God's Kingdom in this community and the world.

I also left the meeting with a profound awareness that I am now a part of that faith filled heritage and that I need to do my part. So beginning this week, Karen and I will be adding 4.7% to our weekly offering. For me it will mean a few less trips to fast food restaurants, but for the church it will mean the resources to touch many more lives for Jesus Christ. If we all join together in this, there's no telling what God will do through the ministries of St. Luke in 2014 and beyond. I can't wait to see what God has in store for us.

Mark

United Methodist Women Notes

United Methodist Women meet the first Tuesday of the month. We study missions and other topics which impact women, children and families. Come, listen, learn and get to know other women with similar concerns.

**Tuesday, February 4 at 6:00 p.m.
is our next meeting.**

John Wesley Study Begins February 9

This course will be led by Dr. Ken Collins and will center around his new book *The Sermons of John Wesley: A Collection for the Christian Journey*. This class will take participants on a spiritual journey as they study John Wesley's transformative illumination of the path of Christian formation. All are welcome! The class will meet from 11:10–12:10 p.m. in the Trinity Room, located in the Life Center. Sign up in the Connection Center or contact Nora Conner, nconner@stlukeumc.org, 269-4687 ext. 242 for more information.

Church Pictorial Directory

St. Luke is pleased to announce that we are in the process of putting together a beautiful, full-color, cutting edge digital directory. This directory will be professionally produced and will include full-color family portraits with names, addresses and telephone numbers of everyone who participates.

The directory will be available online as well as on a mobile app for your convenience. A limited number of color copies will be available. Black and white copies will be available to all members of the church. Every family who participates will receive a free 8 x 10 portrait. It is very important that every family be included to insure a complete up-to-date directory. Our directory will also include a custom cover and special pages for church use. A professional photographer will begin taking family portraits for the directory on March 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. You will find a link to make your appointment on our website for your convenience. If you do not have access to a computer you can call The Portrait Cafe @ 1-877-896-9667 extension 325, and they will make this appointment at your convenience. Appointment times are given on a first come first serve basis. Sign up now to insure a convenient time for you. Every family needs to be included in this beautiful new directory to make it complete.



Budget Needs for December, 2013	\$ 115,695.60
Total Income for December, 2013	\$ 147,383.77
Surplus for the month	\$ 31,688.17
Budget Needs Year-To-Date (as of 12/31/2013)	\$1,203,234.24
Total Income Year-To-Date (as of 12/31/2013)	\$1,182,388.67
Deficit for the year	(\$ 20,845.57)
Total Income Year-To-Date (as of 12/31/2013)	\$1,182,388.67
Expenditures Year-To-Date (as of 12/31/2013)	\$1,181,875.25
Alms Donations–December, 2013	\$ 5,796.00
Christmas Offering (Alms Fund Support)	\$ 1,635.00
Reach Beyond Contributions–December	\$ 31,006.69
Total Reach Beyond Contributions	\$ 671,272.09

(Total Income includes contributions, building use fees and Kroger card receipts)

“No person was ever honored for what he received. Honor has been the reward for what he gave.”

— Calvin Coolidge (1872-1933), 30th U.S. president



Electronic Giving

St. Luke is now accepting online contributions. A page on our website entitled the “Giving” page, lists all the many ways you can contribute to the church and it has a link to a site from which you can make an online gift. With your smart phone or pad, you can click on the QR Code that appears on the church bulletin or on this page to go to the new “Giving” page.

Online Giving is an easy, secure and convenient way to present your tithes and offerings. Your gifts can be given anywhere at a time that is convenient for you. This method of giving allows you to give an electronic check (with your bank routing number and your account number), your bank debit card or your VISA/MC/Discover/AMEX credit card. Please keep in mind that credit card acceptance is for your convenience. St. Luke United Methodist Church promotes sound financial management and does not encourage anyone to enter into debt in order to make a contribution. We suggest this option not be used unless you plan to pay off your credit card balances in full each month. If you have questions, you can contact the Church Business Administrator.