

the *St. Luke* LINE



**Volunteers and Clients
in our God's Pantry**

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs."

1 Corinthians 13:4-5

THIS MONTH

1. Announcements
3. A Personal Word from Pastor Mark Girard
4. Changes in SLUMY
5. Blue Barrel Sunday
6. New Sunday Morning Class: Intro to Christian Theology
7. "Play Ball: It's All About Chances"
9. February Resource for Christian Discipleship
10. Chili Cook-off at Wednesday.com
11. Giving Matters
12. Stewardship Update
13. From the Pantry Shelf

ANNOUNCEMENTS



United
Methodist
Women

UMW Meeting: Praying With Beads

Please come and bring a friend to our UMW meeting this Tuesday, Feb. 5th at 6pm in Fellowship Hall. We will be guided by our own Karen Girard in making personal prayer beads. No crafting skills required! Hope to see you there. Any questions? Call or text Janet Garrison 859-221-5424.



Collecting Powdered Drink Packet Containers

Kids' Cafe needs to collect 35 small plastic "vases" for a flower craft. If you buy powdered drink packets, please save the plastic containers for us!



Encourage a Child and a Family in 2019

Our Tuesday After-School Program, Kids' Cafe has resumed, and we are in great need of additional volunteers for second semester! We average 25-30 K-5 kids each week and rely mostly on retired and semi-retired folks to love and encourage these marginalized children. Could you give one or more Tuesdays to this outreach? Our program runs from 3:00-5:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. There are several ways you can serve; we will help you find where you are comfortable. Please call or text Pam Harned, 859-494-8677 or Sue Lord, 859-797-1586, and we will happily answer your questions!

**TEXT SLUMC
TO 84576**

St. Luke Texts!

You can now opt in to receive important texts reminders from St. Luke! This is a free service and you don't even have to download anything or create a password in order to participate. It lets you choose precisely which groups and ministries you want to get email and text messages from here at St. Luke.

Simply text the letters SLUMC to the SHORT 5-digit phone number 84576. After it texts you back, make sure you click that link and complete the process, choosing what updates you'd like from us.

We'll also use this to send you important updates about church-wide special events coming up, inclement weather announcements, reminders of overall cancellations or schedule changes, and, if ever necessary, immediate church-wide safety and security notifications.

If you can't complete this on your mobile phone, please go online to: flocknote.com/StLukeUMC.

Mission Trip to Guatemala

We are planning another St. Luke mission trip to Guatemala the end of this June. We will have an organizational meeting Thursday, February 7, 6:30 in Room 127..



The trip will be coordinated by Carlos Iboy, who has coordinated our other two trips. He attended St. Luke during his high school years and now directs an English language school in Jalapa.

Plans for our mission include construction on a shelter to eventually house senior citizens, visit an active senior shelter and minister to the residents, sewing lessons for young women in an empowerment program, dental education and fluoride application for rural mountain children, a VBS program for local children, and possibly address the need for control of the large street dog population. If you have questions before the meeting, you may contact Denise Ockerman, ockermanidenise@gmail.com (or Mark Walz at mwalz@stlukeumc.org)

Over 40 Basketball Open Gym

Are you over 40 and interested in playing basketball with others your age in the gym at St. Luke? We will be resuming this fun time on Sunday nights soon. Please let Fred Dorn (fwd326@windstream.net) or Mark Walz (mwalz@stlukeumc.org) know that you are interested.



Use your Hammering Skills for Kids

On Tuesday, February 19, 3:00-5:00, we are doing a Home Depot build project with our Kids' Cafe children and need extra mentors. This is total fun! Our goal is 15 adults per 15 kids for three 30-min sessions. Contact: Stan Durbin, 388-0556, Stanley.Durbin@twc.com.



St. Luke Can Earn Through Kroger Community Rewards!

Help St. Luke earn FREE MONEY with your Kroger Plus card! Every time you shop at Kroger and swipe your Plus card, the church earns money! The one and only catch is that you must sign up at www.kroger.com/communityrewards. Please see the Kroger Sign-Up Sheets in the Welcome or Connection Centers for complete information and sign-up instructions. Contact Dawn Brodersen at DawnBrodersen@gmail.com if you need any help or have questions.



A Personal Word

from Pastor Mark Girard



In 1980, I received my first appointment as a student pastor to Mt. Hebron United Methodist Church in rural Mercer County. The first Sunday I was there, 13 people were present. That was the beginning of nearly 38 years of ministry in the Kentucky Conference of the United Methodist Church. In that time, I have been blessed to serve several great churches and ministries and with so many great people, both lay people and

clergy colleagues. When I was appointed in September 2012 to serve as the Senior Pastor of St. Luke, I was convinced that St. Luke was the best church in the Conference. Nothing that has happened in the ensuing years has changed that conviction. You are a great church and a great people. I believe that God has so much in store for all of you in the days ahead.

So, it is with many mixed emotions that I have made the decision to retire from ministry at the meeting of the Kentucky Annual Conference in June. Just as I know that God has great things in store for you as a church family, I know that God has great things ahead for Karen and me and our family. God is certainly not done with any of us yet, so let's pray together that God will present us all with many opportunities for ministry in the days ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.



St. Luke United Methodist Youth
slummy

NEW SUNDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE

MIDDLE SCHOOL: 5-6PM

COMBINED SNACK/WORSHIP: 6-6:30PM

HIGH SCHOOL: 6:30-7:30PM



Goodbye, Lauren Edgell!

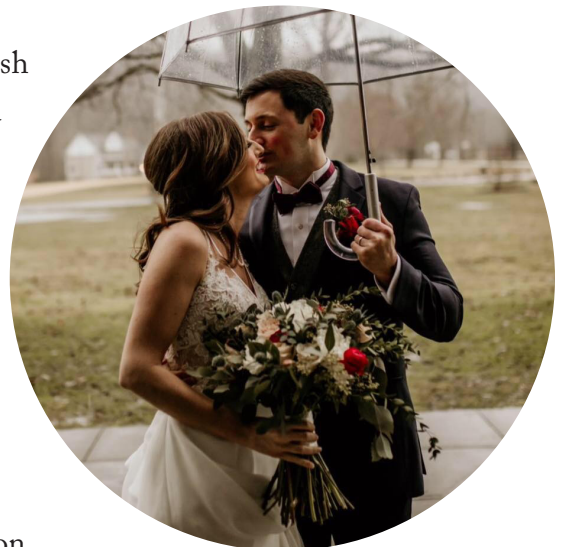
This past summer we welcomed Lauren Edgell and Michael Mayeaux in a “co” capacity to lead our youth ministry (SLUMY). Our young people and the whole church have been blessed by their leadership. In the last few days, however, we have said goodbye to Lauren after she accepted a full time position at Asbury University, also in the area of youth ministry. Lauren has been with us for several years, first as an intern while a student at Asbury, and then as part time co-youth pastor. We will miss her but certainly are excited by this new ministry opportunity for her.



Welcome, Michael Mayeaux!

With Lauren's departure, the staff parish team has asked Michael to step up and be a more full time youth pastor, and Michael has accepted. Michael brings great experience in youth ministry in combination with his great passion for our young people. Welcome, Michael! I know that we will all pray for Michael and our

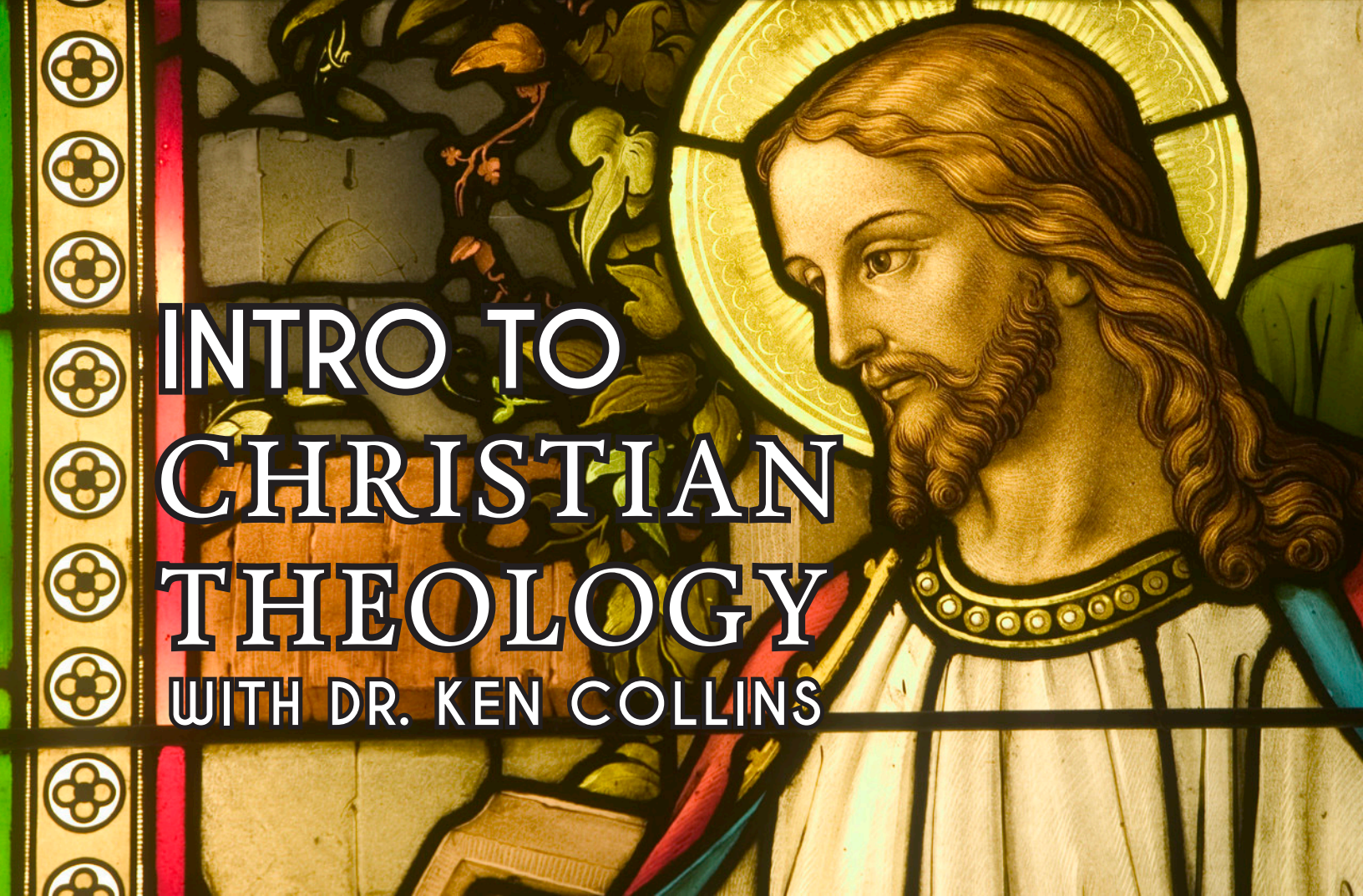
young people in this time of transition. We also want to congratulate Michael and Caitlyn. They were married on Saturday, January 19.



BLUE BARREL SUNDAY



Pick up your Blue Barrel Bag on February 10th and return on February 17th filled with a variety of soups. Surprisingly, soups have been missing from our shelves this winter. Cream soups are popular any time as they can be useful in stretching meals. So don't forget the cream of chicken and cream of mushroom soup and other cream soup versions. Going to be out of town or out with the flu? You can drop off your contributions throughout the month.



INTRO TO CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

WITH DR. KEN COLLINS

New St. Luke Scholar Sunday School Offering



Dr. Ken Collins (professor of Historical Theology and Wesley Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary) will be offering a course entitled: Introduction to Christian Theology, at the 11 O'clock hour on Sunday

mornings in the Trinity room starting on February 3rd. We will be using Dr. Collins' book, "The Scripture Way of Salvation: The Heart of John Wesley's Theology." The course will meet for about 20 lessons and will run possibly into May.

Below is a brief description of the course for those interested:

Introduction to Christian Theology is a course for earnest Christians who are curious about their faith in the face of an increasingly complex world. The course will take up all of the following topics (and more) in a helpful and lively manner, one that will both nurture faith and engage the mind:

- The affirmation of belief in God in the face of the criticism of neo-atheists
- Why the Bible is not just like any other book
- Why evolution and the Christian faith do not contradict each other
- Do the three monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) believe in the same God?
- Why is God's nature best described as holy love?
- How is the church different from the world?



Someone said the sweetest four words in the English language are “Pitchers and Catchers Report.” For baseball fans, those four words announce the beginning of Spring Training for major league baseball teams, 45 days before the start of the season.

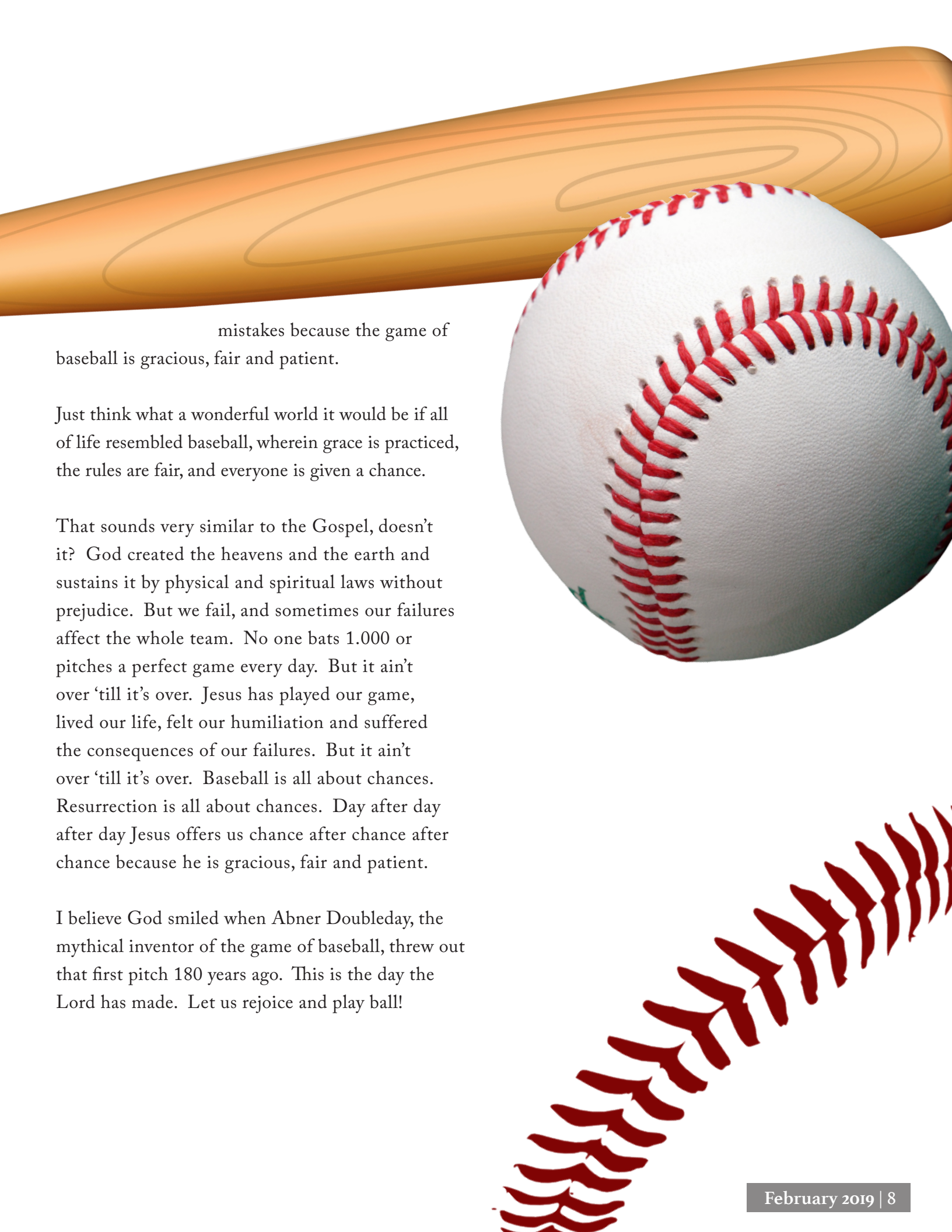
I have been a true baseball fan for as long as I can remember. Over the years, I have discovered that baseball teaches us some very important lessons. For example: A batter with a lifetime .300 batting average is a shoo-in to the Hall of Fame. To put that in perspective, he succeeds less than 1/3 of the time, yet is considered one of the best in the game. That seems very gracious to me.

The rules of baseball are fair. Everyone has the

opportunity to bat. Everyone is allotted 3 strikes and 4 balls at every at-bat. Everyone is given the same chance each time. Everyone is equal on the diamond.

And, there is no clock in baseball. Baseball is the only major sport that is not governed by the sweep of time. In baseball, time is always on your side. Yogi Berra, one of the great theologians of baseball, once said, “It ain’t over ‘till it’s over.” Until that last out concludes the game, either team has a chance to win.

In 1986, San Francisco Giant third baseman, Bob Brenley, set a major league record with four fielding errors in one inning. And then, in his last at-bat, in the ninth inning with the count 3 balls and 2 strikes, he hit a solo home run, and the Giants won the game 7-6. Bob Brenley was redeemed from his

A wooden baseball bat with a light brown, grainy texture is positioned diagonally across the top of the page. Below it, a white baseball with red stitching is shown in a three-quarter view. The stitching is a classic double-stitch pattern. The background is plain white.

mistakes because the game of baseball is gracious, fair and patient.

Just think what a wonderful world it would be if all of life resembled baseball, wherein grace is practiced, the rules are fair, and everyone is given a chance.

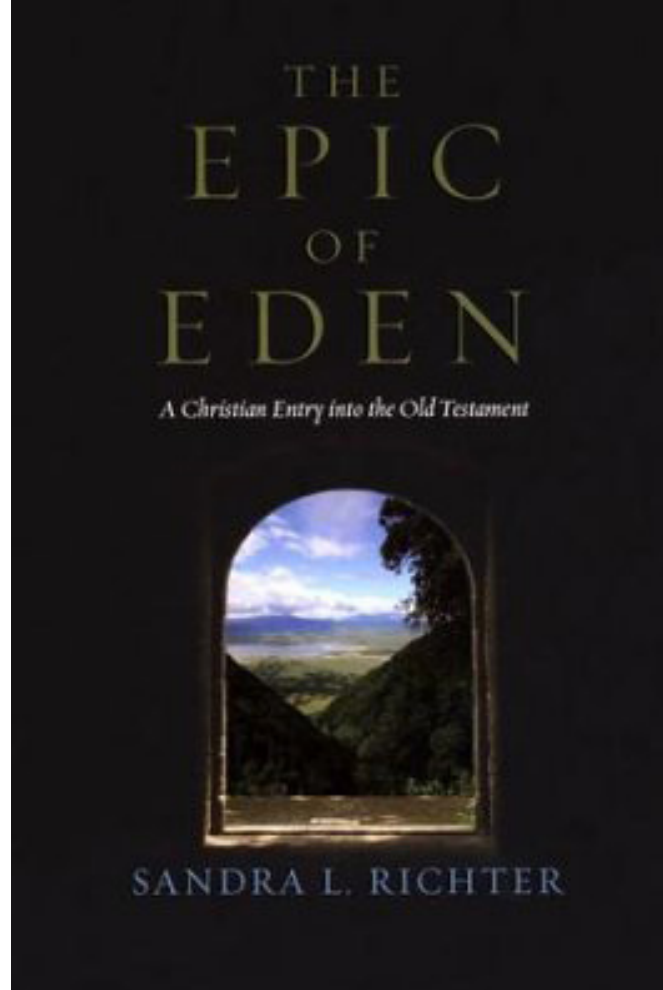
That sounds very similar to the Gospel, doesn't it? God created the heavens and the earth and sustains it by physical and spiritual laws without prejudice. But we fail, and sometimes our failures affect the whole team. No one bats 1.000 or pitches a perfect game every day. But it ain't over 'till it's over. Jesus has played our game, lived our life, felt our humiliation and suffered the consequences of our failures. But it ain't over 'till it's over. Baseball is all about chances. Resurrection is all about chances. Day after day after day Jesus offers us chance after chance after chance because he is gracious, fair and patient.

I believe God smiled when Abner Doubleday, the mythical inventor of the game of baseball, threw out that first pitch 180 years ago. This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and play ball!

FEBRUARY RESOURCE

for Christian Discipleship

The St. Luke Grow and Equip team is promoting different resources for Christian Growth and Discipleship each month. We hope to expose you to different books, podcasts, and devotionals that you might not have heard of before, in order to help you grow closer in your walk with the Lord.



The St. Luke February resource for Christian Discipleship is the book, “The Epic of Eden,” by Dr. Sandra Richter. Dr. Sandra Richter is currently the Chair of Biblical Studies at Westmont College in California and has been a professor of Old Testament at many seminaries including Asbury Seminary. Her book the Epic of Eden is a very accessible intro to the Old Testament and is published as a book and as a weekly Bible study with video sessions.

In “The Epic of Eden,” Dr. Richter tries to help the average reader understand the Old Testament amidst its complexity by explaining large OT themes such as covenant, and by explaining the ‘landmark’ characters, such as Abraham, Moses and David. Through her deep understanding of the Ancient world and the scripture, Dr. Richter gives us an incredible gift in allowing us to understand this Testament, which is most of our Bible. We encourage you buy the book or use the Bible study with your group, as this is one of the top resources for understanding the Old Testament.



STAFF CHILI COOK-OFF AT WEDNESDAY.COMM IS FEBRUARY 6!



Come out on Wednesday to enjoy the chili as the St. Luke staff competes in our Chili Cook-off! We will have judges to see which one of our staff members make the best chili. There will also be cornbread, cheese, crackers, chips, sour cream, onions, and ice cream sandwiches. As usual, the meal is for a suggested donation of \$5 a plate and the proceeds will go to support the Nicaragua Water Project.

Come out and enjoy a great night of food and fellowship as well as check out one of our new classes this semester!

Giving MATTERS

THANKS FOR BEING GENEROUS PEOPLE IN ACTION

Due to the continuing pressure that the mortgage payments are putting on the finances of the church, 2018 turned out to be a very challenging year. Due to the steady leadership of Pastor Nora Conner, Financial Assistant Venus Brown, and the Finance Team, the church was able to navigate some rough waters. At the same time, however, 2018 was another record year of giving, and the month of December was the best ever, in terms of giving, for St. Luke. So why was it such a difficult year? Quite simply, it goes back 8 or 9 years ago, to when the church gave the go-ahead to build the Life Center. At that time the plan that was approved anticipated that the annual increase in giving would be 9% for the duration of the mortgage. But the next year, the Great Recession happened, and though giving to the church has increased every year of the mortgage, that increase has been more in the range of 2 to 3% per year rather than the 9%, which is a significant gap when trying to retire a mortgage that is now more than \$250,000 per year. Through it all, you have continued to be Generous People In Action and we thank you. The Life Center has opened so many additional opportunities for ministry and service. Giving continues to increase from year to year, the Balloon Fund (designed to pay off the mortgage in ten years rather than twenty, thus saving nearly a million dollars in interest payment over the life of the loan) has been at nearly 100% over the last four

years, and our commitment to mission and outreach continues to grow every year. Thank you for your continued generosity. Even in the midst of a difficult 2018 there is so much to be thankful for and much reason for optimism concerning the future of St. Luke United Methodist Church. The years ahead will continue to present some significant challenges, but with God's help we will continue to move toward our vision of Jesus Christ in Every Life. St. Luke is a great church, and together we will continue to do great things for and in the name of Jesus. Let's pray that all of us can help the church move toward that 9% increase in giving in the coming year.

Your generosity was not only evident in your giving to the church, but also your holiday gifting to the staff. On behalf of the entire staff, thank you for all that you did for the staff as we celebrated Advent/Christmas. It is truly a joy and privilege to be in ministry together at St. Luke.

Rev. Mark Girard



Senior Pastor



STEWARDSHIP

SHARING THE GIFTS WE HAVE



The information is a summary of our finances through December 2018. Many thanks for your faithfulness and for the many ways you impact our church and the world for Jesus Christ. May we continue to be good stewards of God's gifts!

DECEMBER 2018

Budget needs	\$112,470.84
Expenses	\$ 102,214.35
Total income*	\$193,850.61
Expenses-to-Income difference	\$91,636.26
Alms contributions for December 2018	\$6,177.00
Balloon Fund contributions for 2018	\$69,892.54
Total Balloon Fund contributions to date	\$303,627.45
Life Center mortgage balance (as of 12-31-18)	\$2,169,193.38

2018 FISCAL YEAR-TO-DATE

Budget needs (as of 12-31-18)	\$674,825.04
Expenses (as of 12-31-18)	\$602,623.58
Total income (as of 12-31-18)*	\$636,318.82
Expenses-to-Income difference (as of 12-31-18)	\$33,695.24

*Total income includes contributions, building use fees, and Kroger card receipts.

** Our current fiscal year runs from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

Questions? Please contact Nora Conner, Associate Pastor/Director of Ministry and Stewardship

PANTRY

St. Luke operates a food pantry through God's Pantry on Mondays through Fridays from 1-2:30 p.m. & 6-7:30 p.m. The clients are given an opportunity to pick food items to form a nutritional food selection. Food supplements are prepared from both donated and purchased food and contain the items necessary to prepare enough meals for five to seven days.



by Karen Hinkle



DAYS of the amount of packaged and canned food needed to serve the clients. Let us keep it going! The need is great.

LOOKING TO SERVE?

Are you looking for a place to serve in the new year? I know where you can be a Christian witness simply by being present. In recent weeks, we have been serving over 200 client families per week at our Monday through Friday pantry. A few hours can make an impact.

Thanks St Luke! We ended 2018 with a real bang. The "Different kind of Advent" food donation effort together with our regular December Blue Barrel Bag project yielded a total of 2000 pounds of food! That was a wonderful result. However, you may be interested to know that with the number of families we have been serving that is equal to about TWO

WEDNESDAY NIGHT PANTRY

On some days we serve as many as, if not more, clients at night than during the afternoon. Definitely more willing hands are needed for the Wednesday night pantry at St. Luke to supplement the current volunteers. Are you employed and not free during the day? Wednesday evening

PANTRY



SERVING CLIENTS

If you like interaction with people, this can be very rewarding. You will direct clients through the food categories using pantry selection guidelines. If interested you can learn the computer system for client check-in and assist with that function. Choose once a week or once a month or whatever fits your schedule.

For stocking or serving clients, you can contact Karen Hinkle at kphinkle@twc.com for general information or contact Kathy Gendreau at katgen452@twc.com regarding specific openings and scheduling.

SENIOR COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION

On the second Monday morning of each month St. Luke is the site for over seventy families to pick up commodity items under the Senior Commodity food program. Volunteers set up the space to accommodate the delivered food, fill the boxes and then assist clients to their vehicle. Hours are roughly 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Contact Stan Durbin at Stanley.durbin@twc.com if you are interested in helping with this ministry. Volunteers able to assist families to their car are especially needed.



could be a good time for you and your entire family to consider working together one evening a month. Children 13 years of age and older are permitted to volunteer, and students often need to earn community service hours. Working time is 5:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. Contact Karen Hinkle at kphinkle@twc.com for more details.

STOCKING SHELVES

With daily deliveries Monday through Friday, volunteers work to get items on the shelves and ready for the afternoon shift to serve clients. Work time is typically 10 a.m. to 12 noon. One needs to be able to move about and handle cans and packages of food. We have some folks going south for a few months and others needing to adjust their schedules, so there are several days with pending vacancies.

With the increase in the number of clients served in the evening shift, there is the potential need to have one or two persons who could come in to restock for the evening and then to prepare information about what is needed for the next day. That time would likely be from 3-4 p.m. Interested? Contact Karen Hinkle at kphinkle@twc.com



2351 Alumni Dr., Lexington, KY 40517 • 859-269-4687

This newsletter is also available online in full color at stlukeumc.org/newsletter.

Worship Schedule:

9:30 a.m., 10:45, 11:00 a.m.

God's Backyard (K - 5th grade): 11:00 a.m.

Swahili Worship: 12:30 p.m.

Multicultural Worship: 3:00 p.m.

Child care available at all services.