

Give thanks

The Monthly Newsletter of St. Luke United Methodist Church - November 2015

Thankful Hearts and Full Plates

Make-a-Difference Night, Transitions, Holidays and Thanksgiving

Can you believe it? It is already November! This month brings to mind many things. Pumpkins, fall leaves, autumn decorations, cooler weather and, of course, turkey, pumpkin pie, and family. It's a wonderful time of the year to give thanks. We give thanks, at St. Luke, for all the many people who help, by our ministries, to reach our mission of *Jesus Christ in Every Life*. We give thanks for our community, our building, for our servants and volunteers,

our staff, and for our generous church family.

November is also a very busy time at St. Luke. We are blessed to have a lot of opportunities to serve, fellowship, reach out, and worship. Be sure to check out all the upcoming opportunities and events and we hope you have a very happy Thanksgiving. We are so very thankful for you!

*"Give thanks to the LORD,
for he is good; his love endures
forever."
Psalm 107:1*

This Month

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Dear Friends,

The year 2015 has been a time of great transition for me personally. The year began with the passing of my mother after more than 90 well-lived years on this Earth. Her passing has left quite a void in my life. There are still times when I get in the car and think I really need to drive out to Wesley Village and see her, or the phone rings and I think I really need to call and talk with my mom, and then I remember that those are things of the past that I will never be able to do again. And the other major transition took place with the wedding of my daughter Anna. I am still not sure what changes will take place because of that, but I know that things have changed and that the time of transition is just beginning. And it's been a time of transition in the church. Much loved staff persons have retired or moved into other areas of ministry. And we have welcomed Will Solomon into full-time service. Even some long standing ministries are transitioning into other opportunities to serve, in some different ways. All of this has reminded me that these times of transition in my life, are neither good or bad, but it is what we make of these periods of transition that will define how we proceed in the future. It is always at this time of year that I realize anew that the coming year will be ripe with opportunities, and I ask myself if I am prepared to take hold of all that God places within my grasp. Will I be up to seizing the Day that the Lord has made?

It is also the time of year that we must ask that question of us as a church. We don't have to be around St. Luke very long to know that God is providing us lots of opportunities to be in ministry in our community and beyond. The number of people that are being served through worship and discipleship and service is at times overwhelming of both our people and material resources. And yet the story of St. Luke has always been one of meeting every challenge that God has placed before us. God's pantry, Kid's Café, ever increasing opportunities to worship, missional communities, children's and youth ministries that are bursting at the seams and reaching neighborhood young people in record numbers, Upwards, and an overall dynamic focus on mission and outreach, are just some of the evidences of all

that God has placed before us. And since scripture tells us that to those who are given much, much more will be given, we can look to 2016 in anticipation that God will open more avenues for ministry and outreach in the coming year. The question is: Will we as a church be up to seizing hold of this day that the Lord has made?

The last two months of the year are the busiest ones in the church. We are planning special worship opportunities for All Saints Day (Nov. 1), Confirmation Sunday (Nov. 15), Thanksgiving (Nov. 22) and the Advent/Christmas Season (which begins November 29). There will be many special celebrations around these special times in the church year. At the same time we are planning and budgeting for a new year – trying to make sure that vital ministries will continue while also anticipating the new opportunities the Lord will provide. It's an exciting time, but that excitement is somewhat tempered by the fact that we are moving into the last two months of the year facing a major financial shortfall in our anticipated budget for the year. This, of course, is not unusual in the church, but it does cast a cloud of caution over our anticipation and planning for the coming year. It's time for all of us to seize the day that the Lord has given us.

I have shared with you in the past that Karen and I have long been tithers. In fact, we believe that the tithe (10%) is the starting point in our commitment to the church. We are so excited about what God is doing at and through St. Luke, that we intend to step up our giving well beyond the tithe in these last two months – to give sacrificially- so that the church can move boldly into the new year that God has planned for us. Will you join us? Once again we need everyone to respond to the challenge with glad and generous hearts – as St. Luke always has. Let's seize the Day that the Lord has given us and to God be the glory!

Pastor Mark Girard



The Advent Jesus

Worship during the Advent/Christmas Season is always a curious mixture of the familiar and the expectant. Familiar in that there are many traditions that accompany the season. We know for instance that the music ministry will play an even more essential role during worship on the Sundays of Advent. And we know that the Sanctuary and Church will be beautifully decorated. We will light the Candles of the Advent Wreath each week and hear the familiar scriptures of the coming Messiah and the birth of Jesus. We'll have two services on Christmas Eve which will be packed with old friends and new. And those services will conclude with the lighting of the Christ Candle and the singing of Silent Night, proclaiming once more the birth of Christ. We cherish all of these familiar moments of worship and celebration as we move through the weeks leading up to Christmas. But at the same time Advent should also be about expectancy and anticipation because what may be a familiar story to us, the story of the birth of Christ into the world and into our lives, may be brand new to one who is sharing the pew with you. Advent/Christmas is also a time when many visit the church, or return to the church, and it is a time of increased seeking

and receptiveness to the meaning of Christ's birth. We should not take for granted that "everyone" has heard it before, because there are many who have not. And some of those will visit St. Luke for these special times of worship. Welcome them with the love of Christ which we celebrate, and take a moment to share with them the moment that Christ was born to and in you. Christmas is not just about celebrating the familiar ways



and remembering. Christmas is also about anticipating the birth of a savior in hearts and lives this very day. The greatest gift we can ever give to another person is Jesus Christ born and living forever in their heart. We are in the midst of planning for the worship services leading up to Christmas Day. On December 6, the Children will be leading us. December 13, we will be blessed (in

special measure) by the Chancel Choir. And on December 20, we will have a traditional service of Lessons and Carols. Our Advent Celebration will culminate with two candlelight services on Christmas Eve. Mark all of these on your Calendars as "can't miss", and come let's celebrate together in familiar – yet expectant ways. What will the Advent of Jesus mean for your life this year?



Join Us for Make a Difference Night

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 5:15 - 7:00 P.M.

WEDNESDAY.COMMUNITY

Our fall Wednesday.comm season will conclude on November 18th with a meal, fellowship, and activities as well as tables for placing Missions donations. Everyone is encouraged to attend, even if you've never made it to a Wednesday.comm meal or class before!

Come join us for an evening that "Makes a Difference"!

MEXICAN DINNER

The evening begins with an authentic Mexican dinner prepared by our very own Jose and Victoria Buenrostro. Meals are \$5.00 per plate (sharing is allowed, max. \$15 per family).



MISSIONS COLLECTION TABLES

- Nathaniel Mission
- Kentucky Refugee Ministries - Boxes of Hope
- UMCOR Disaster Relief Cleaning Buckets
- Christmas Cards to Shut-ins and the Military
- Coats and Blankets for Kentucky Refugee Ministry
- God's Pantry Food Donations
- Craft table to make a simple Christmas gift for a shut-in or neighbor

A list of needed items will be in the bulletin and at the Connection Center Soon.



Health Expo After Glow

The St. Luke Health Expo was a resounding success! The Health Department administered 83 flu vaccines. Twenty-three units of blood were donated, and we had over 20 professional exhibitors with valuable health information and materials to take home. Between 125 and 150 persons attended the event. The importance of expos like ours can be measured in a single detail: We learned that one lovely young lady has a suspicious lump in her breast, and we made the appropriate contact and referred her to a physician for follow-up. It was so much fun to hear that cow bell ring every 15 minutes when door prizes (including a \$50 dollar Malone's gift card) were awarded, and we had apples for everyone!

WEDNESDAY.COMMUNITY
+ HEALTH EXPO

There were many gifts for those who came: note pads, pens, candy, toothpaste, toothbrushes, jar openers, letter openers, book markers and much more. We want to express our thanks to Aldersgate Camp for the delicious dinner, and we are grateful for all the volunteers who worked so hard to help ensure our expo was effective and exciting.....that includes the church staff who worked equally hard as they handled many details in advance and during the evening.

We encourage everyone to use your St. Luke shopping bag often at grocery stores...it's a wonderful way to bring "Jesus Christ in Every Life."

- the St. Luke Community Health Nurses

St. Luke
HOLIDAY
Bazaar

**Saturday,
November 21**
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Special Preview night
Friday, November 20
6:00 p.m.- 9:00 p.m.

Avoid the mall hassles and shop at the **Holiday Bazaar** hosted by the United Methodist Women.

Vendors and artists will be at St. Luke in the Gym on **Saturday, November 21** from **9:00 a.m** until **3:00 p.m.**

Come and find unique gifts and helpful items.

Mark your calendar now and plan on a stress-free shopping experience. There will also be a special preview night on Friday, November 20, 6-9 pm. for St. Lukers and their guests.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Opportunity In Missions: Hurry, be one of the twelve.

The Going Forth team of St. Luke UMC is sponsoring a mission trip to Honduras in partnership with GO International. The trip is scheduled for January 22 through January 30. The team will be involved in the following projects: a Vacation Bible School, light construction, sewing classes, eyeglass distribution, and medical outreach. If you would like additional information, please contact Earl Brady at 859-619-0160 or earlbrady13@gmail.com or Reid Buchanan at rbuchanan@stlukeumc.org.

Church/Charge Conference December 2

District Superintendent James Williams has scheduled our annual Church/Charge Conference for Wednesday evening, December 2 at 6:00 p.m. At this time we will be affirming our leadership for 2016, setting pastoral salaries, celebrating 2015, and anticipating 2016. Every member of the church is welcome to come and participate in this time of conferencing and worship.

Help Prepare Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Gifts at a Processing Center

The world's largest Christmas project of its kind, Operation Christmas Child, uses gift-filled shoeboxes to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world. On Sunday, December 13 following the 11:10 a.m. worship service, Earl Brady will be leading a group to Atlanta to assist in preparing shoeboxes at the Operation Christmas Child processing center. Depart St. Luke at 12:30 p.m. and return to St. Luke on Tuesday evening. Transportation provided by St. Luke for fourteen. Two nights lodging and food cost are covered by the participant. To sign up or for additional information contact Earl Brady at 619-0160 or earlbrady13@gmail.com.



Kentucky Refugee Winter Coat Donations

Fall is upon us! With these cool mornings and moving into winter, Kentucky Refugee Ministry (KRM) is in need of winter coats for newly-arrived/ arriving refugee families. We can accept new and gently used coats. We are also in need of warm blankets, hats, gloves, and scarves. Items can be dropped off in the Resource Room and marked KRM or at Kentucky Refugee Ministries, 1206 North Limestone, Lexington, KY 40505. Telephone 859-226-5661. For more information contact Reid Buchanan 859-269-4687 or e-mail rbuchanan@stlukeumc.org.

Shepherding Ministry

To welcome people into the life of the church, St. Luke will begin a "shepherding" ministry this fall. Folks new to St. Luke will have the opportunity to be introduced to a person or family of St. Luke who will serve as their guide and a resource in learning about small groups, areas of service, and other opportunities to get involved at St. Luke. Any and all persons interested in learning more about this new ministry please be in touch with Casey McKenzie at camcks3641@twc.com or Reid Buchanan at rbuchanan@stlukeumc.org or 859-269-4687.

United Methodist Mountain Mission Truck

The Mountain Mission truck is coming this month! Please drop off donated items to the Resource Room (just past the Connection Center) before November 23.

Thanksgiving Meal for Nathaniel Mission

Nathaniel Mission will be serving a Thanksgiving meal on Tuesday, November 24. St. Luke is providing cranberry sauce and dinner rolls for the meal. Please sign up at the Connection Center and bring your donations to church no later than November 22.

Christmas Cookies

This year when you do your holiday baking, make extra and freeze them for those working on Christmas Eve or Day. We will deliver homemade cookies to police stations, fire departments, hospitals, nursing homes, gas stations, pharmacies. The more cookies we have, the more workers we can acknowledge for their service. Help bless those who serve while we enjoy the holiday. Watch for future announcements on when and where to bring your cookies.

St. Luke's Prayer Shawl Ministry

This ministry started just in the spring, but already over 20 prayer shawls have been given to those who are in difficult seasons of life. Some of the recipients were in hospice, in the hospital, or grieving the loss of loved ones, and some were people who just needed to know that they were being prayed for and that someone cares about them, and the responses of those who receive prayer shawls are truly heartwarming. We would love for you to join us, and bring a friend! If you don't know how to knit or crochet, we will happily teach you. We also have wonderful fellowship together and spend time praying for each request we receive. All are welcome! You will be blessed, as will those who receive the prayer shawls you create. We meet every Tuesday morning from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in Room 114.

Stewardship Update

Budget Needs for September, 2015	\$102,500.40
*Total Income for September, 2015	\$102,422.35
Deficit for the month	(\$78.05)
Budget Needs Year-To-Date (as of 9/30/2015)	\$999,378.90
Total Income Year-To-Date (as of 9/30/2015)	\$862,034.74
Deficit for the year	(\$137,344.16)
Alms Donations – September	\$3,856.00
Balloon Fund Contributions – September	\$2,087.00
Balloon Fund Contributions – Year-To-Date	\$93,166.13
Mortgage Fund Balance as of 9/30/2015	\$2,763,726.03

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



“Stewardship is the act of organizing your life so that God can spend you.” — Lynn A. Miller, author

A FEW Final Notes...



The Pastor's Office has Moved!

Our ministries keep growing! Many thanks to Will Solomon, who is developing and leading a new Sunday School class and who is also designing a space that will be conducive to prayer and creativity.

In order to make room for this new class and other groups that need the room, Pastor Mark has moved out of his office in the Life Center hallway. His office is now in room 3 off the Fellowship Hall. Stop by and say hi to him in his new space!

Thank you from Positively Java (our coffee supplier)

Dear St. Luke,

It is a pleasure serving your church family coffee! Because of customers like you, we are able to fulfill our mission/passion: unite families through adoption and help foster children reach their potential. We just gave **\$1000.00** to another Central Kentucky family who is adopting a 7 year old boy. We will continue to support them and others as they allow God to knit their family together through adoption. At least 6 foster children attended summer camp this summer due to the commitment of our customers. Thank you for allowing us to follow Gods command in James 1:7!



Thank you St. Luke!

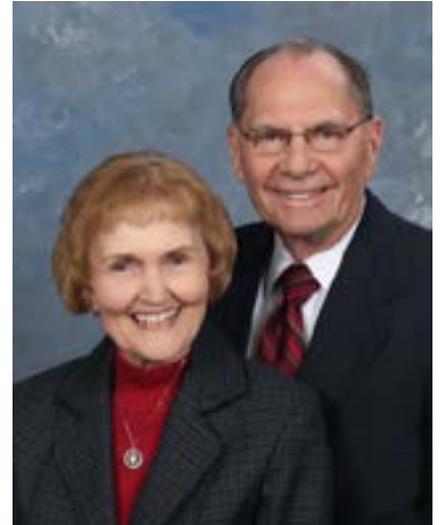
The staff has been overwhelmed by the kindness shown by the church family during this Staff Appreciation Month. We have been fed lunch on three successive Tuesdays, received countless cards, notes and letters, and many gift cards and other thoughtful gifts. We have truly felt appreciated and we are deeply grateful for everything that has been done. Thanks particularly to the Staff Parish Relations Team for leading in this month of celebration. You have made us feel loved, special and affirmed.



Thank you!

Dear St. Luke Family,

I want to take this opportunity to thank the people of St. Luke UMC for giving me the opportunity to serve as a minister of this church for 14 years. It has been a special blessing to Betty and myself that we have had this extended involvement, in our “retirement years,” to be a part of a loving and caring congregation that has shown us every kindness and consideration. I also want to thank all of you who worked so hard to make possible the wonderful Retirement Celebration on October 23. All the cards and gifts and your taking the time to be there with us was overwhelming. In the years to come, the memories of our time with you here at St. Luke will be filled with gratitude and heartwarming reminders of loving friends and the joy of God’s Grace among us. For all you have done, Betty and I offer our sincere thanks, and Praise God!



Grace and Peace,

Betty and Lowell

THANK YOU

Dear Members of St. Luke UMC,

Let me take this opportunity to thank each of you for allowing me to serve during the past several years as your Pastor of Christian Counseling. It has been both a blessing for me and an important ministry for our church. We have served those in need within our congregation, and we have had many who were seeking pastoral counseling beyond the walls of our church.

Second, let me thank you for the wonderful retirement reception you had for me recently. Your presence, your cards and your gifts were a terrific outpouring of your care which i will always treasure.

In my retirement from the staff, you can continue to expect my ongoing loyalty and service to St. Luke.

Don Cutter





ST. LUKE MINISTRY WITH GOD'S PANTRY MOVES OFF CAMPUS

The community wide God's Pantry Thanksgiving food distribution is set for Monday and Tuesday, November 23 and 24 and is undergoing changes this year. The major food distribution will be at one location rather than two.

This year's location is the Imani Baptist Church on Georgetown Road. St. Luke and Broadway Christian are continuing as partners in the

community wide ministry effort. St. Luke volunteers will man the distribution on only one day: Tuesday, November 24. However, we will man three service shifts instead of two. Those will be 9:00 to 11:00 a.m; 1:00 to 3:00 p.m and 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Due to the reduction in the total service times and the number of clients to be served each day we will need at least as many volunteers as in the past. Last year St. Luke had over 130 volunteers and many of them worked multiple days and multiple shifts. Volunteer sign-up sheets are posted in the Connection Center but if you know that you can and will volunteer in some way please contact Karen Hinkle at kphinkle@twc.com or call 859-421-1232. The need is great and the blessings are many.

"I would like to thank you for the Thanksgiving dinner groceries my daughter and I received from the pantry at your church, what a wonderful blessing. I can't thank you enough. God bless you all." - 2014 Food Recipient





GIVE THANKS

WISHING YOU & YOUR LOVED ONES
A HAPPY THANKSGIVING





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

Our Service Times:

Sanctuary: 8:30 a.m., 9:45 a.m., 11:10 a.m.

Youth Worship: 9:45 a.m.

God's Backyard (K - 5th grade): 11:10 a.m.

Swahili Worship: 12:30 p.m.

Multicultural Worship: 3:00 p.m.

Childcare available at all services.