



Transformation Times

"A multi-cultural congregation open to all."

October 2011
Volume 1, Number 9

Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her..... Ephesians 5:25b-26 NIV

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR CHURCH?

Generosity is a term we rarely use. Some may think it is reserved for only the wealthy. Actually, generosity is not about our bank accounts, it is about our hearts. Jesus' response to the widow's offering shows this. Generosity reflects God's nature. Our generosity impacts eternity, as people find and experience God through the ministries of our church.



Ministry Flows From the Heart and is Made Possible by Your Generosity. *"And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God."* 1 Peter 2:5 NLT

October 23 is Stewardship Pledge Sunday. This year's theme is *Extravagant Generosity: The Heart of Giving*. Mary Ann Stone and Frank Stormer are leading this year's drive. Please give them your prayerful support and words of encouragement.

Veteran's Day/Retire the Flags Ceremony

According to the United States Flag Code (www.usflag.org): "When a flag is so worn it is no longer fit to serve as a symbol of our country, it should be destroyed by burning in a dignified manner."



We will invite our neighbors to join us in a retire the flags ceremony on **Sunday, November 6 at 12:30pm** in the Ragan Park Shelter. Jason Odneal and the Boy Scouts will lead the ceremony. Please invite a friend for Veteran's Day worship and retire your flags together.



The Staff/Parish Relations Committee is pleased to announce the **hiring of a part-time Interim Treasurer** for October 1-December 31. **Sara Freese** will work four hours a week on Friday mornings. Sara has 11 years of work experience in bookkeeping, finance and tax preparation. She is a United Methodist and has worked for three UM churches. Sara earned two bachelor of science degrees, in accounting and business management. Future announcements will be made about the treasurer position in 2012. -- Mandy McConnico, Staff/Parish Relations Chair

Reflections from Emonia



I receive a monthly newsletter designed to help churches effectively reach out to their communities; to reach their mission of *making new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world*. I like this newsletter as the author speaks from a United Methodist perspective. The last several months he has talked about first time guests. Below is a copy of one of the articles for your reading:

From the Perspective of a First Time Guest by Dr. Don Nations

My family attended three different churches in three weeks last month. One was a new church start, one was the parent of a new church start and one was an established church offering multiple worship services. When asked to describe our experience at the churches, the phrase that came to mind was "overwhelmingly mediocre".

Two of the three had greeters at the door who were mildly friendly. All three had guest welcome stations but none of them were staffed. The church people seemed to like each other, so much in fact that they consistently gathered in the middle of walkways and doorways making it difficult to get into the worship space. All three churches violated some basics when it came to child protection policies. The band/music in all three was adequate but nothing to write home about. The preaching in all three was not terrible but it was also nothing that made us long to return to hear more. Does any of that sound familiar?

Guests are precious gifts from God. The way we receive them is incredibly important. How we treat them - and each other - is a reflection of what we believe about God and the Gospel we preach. What will your church do this weekend to help guests feel like they have found a spiritual home?

I certainly don't think St. Luke's belongs in the "overwhelmingly mediocre" category - for we have great people who serve as greeters and volunteer in the welcome and information stations. I would like to change the question Dr. Nations asks to: What will **you** do Sunday to help guests feel like they have found a spiritual home?

What happens after they are seated? Does the warmth, excitement and joy continue? Do we say "Hi, I don't think I've seen you before. I am (give name)." Or, do we offer a nice smile then return to what we were doing? You might say that addressing guests directly is a little overwhelming, but wouldn't you rather be "overwhelmingly overwhelmed" than "overwhelmingly mediocre"? It's a choice and it's everyone's job to reach out to guests so that they can experience Jesus Christ.

Be blessed and be a blessing,
Pastor E

What's Going On?

QUESTIONS ON GENEROSITY REVEAL CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT

Practicing extravagant generosity by graciously giving our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness is the Christian thing to do! The question is, "How much prayer, presence, gifts, service and witness can I give?" The answer reveals our level of faithful and spiritual maturity in our relationship with God.



Are we:

- 1) Setting aside time to pray daily for our families, church, community and world?
- 2) Worshiping and studying every week unless an emergency, work, or travel occurs?
- 3) Giving at least 10% of our income to the mission and ministries of St. Luke's, or working toward this goal by increasing our giving by 1% every year?
- 4) Volunteering our time, skills, knowledge and labor to benefit others?
- 5) Sharing our faith by talking about how Jesus makes a difference in our lives?

During our October stewardship drive, we will study Extravagant Generosity: The Heart of Giving by Bishop Robert Schnase. Please respond, in your heart, to the following challenges: "Name one person you admire and respect because of all they keep for themselves. Name someone you consider generous and spiritually mature who constantly complains about giving, or who always seeks to give the least amount required" (Daily Readings on the Grace of Giving, page 72). I couldn't think of anyone, could you?

IT'S A BIG DEAL

Over the past few months I have enjoyed the times when members have told me about the friends, co-workers and relatives they have invited to church. The look of pleasure on your faces is delightful. I also enjoy being introduced to your guests. I commend those of you who have taken this step forward into evangelism. If you've never invited anyone to church it's a big deal! It's also a big deal every time we invite someone to learn about Jesus and this congregation. We're all planting seeds of faith so God's grace can grow in open hearts. Will you continue to invite un-churched friends or relatives to fellowship and worship? Your participation in reaching our Vision goals moves us yet another step closer to making new disciples for Jesus Christ. Future opportunities:

- ✓ October 30 -- Pumpkin Fest trunk or treat fun for the local community.
- ✓ November 6 -- Veterans' Day/Retire the Flags ceremony to properly dispose of tattered flags after worship in the parking lot, led by Jason Odneal and Boy Scouts.
- ✓ December 21 -- Blue Christmas at 7pm for stress-free reflection on the season.
- ✓ December 24 -- Christmas Eve children's service at 5pm and Candlelight Communion at 7pm.
- ✓ December 25 -- Celebrate Jesus' birthday on his birthday with one combined service. Lots of festive singing from our music ministries.

OCTOBER CHURCH CONFERENCE

All members are encouraged to attend our annual church conference to vote on 2012 pastoral compensation and new officers. This year Yolanda Villa, Heartland Central district superintendent, is holding cluster conferences. We will be meeting with 10 other churches on Saturday, October 22 from 9 to 11:30am, at Blue Ridge UMC, 5500 Blue Ridge Blvd.

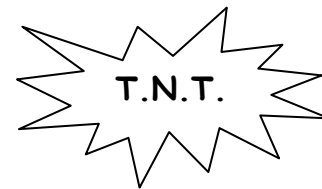
See you in Church,
Pastor Londia

MINISTRY UPDATES FROM OUR STAFF

Special Notice: The Church Council meeting has been moved from October 24 to **October 31** at 6:30pm due to scheduling conflicts.

A message from Sue Kemp, adult ministry director

The 3rd Session of T.N.T. will be running on Tuesday evenings through November 29. The **SMART** Weight Loss Class will continue through that time. You can get some good tips on healthy eating as we head into the holidays. Watch for news of other classes starting up mid-October that you will have an opportunity to participate in. We had a very successful sign-up for the 3rd Session so don't miss out when the new classes are offered.



St. Luke's is fortunate to have **nine adult Sunday school classes** from which to choose. If you haven't been attending a Sunday school class, think about visiting some of them between worship services from 9:50 to 10:50am. Hopefully, you attended Rally Day in September and got a taste of what the different classes are like.

A message from Jason Dattilo, youth ministry director

Seven youth attended the **Rock the Light festival** on September 4 at Youthfront Camp in LaCygne, KS. They got to listen to bands Switchfoot, Superchick, Fireflight, and others as well as getting some personal spiritual time on the grounds. This annual event is attended by youth and churches from all over the area and is a time to celebrate and worship in a setting with other youth.

The youth will be participating in the **Crop Walk** on Sunday, October 9 in Loose Park. This event helps raise money to fight hunger locally, nationally, and internationally. If you would like to make a donation please see the youth on Sunday mornings.



A message from Donna Gregory, early childhood director

Fall greetings from the children and staff of the Early Education Center!

After a hot, hot summer we are finally back in the swing of fall activities. Preschool is under way for children three to five years with 27 attending either full or part time. An additional 18 children age two and under attend our center full time. Call Donna at 816-763-8507 for information about current openings.




In October we will have **individual and class pictures** taken, and our prekindergarten classes will visit **Faulkner's Pumpkin Farm**.

Thanks to all of you who supported our nut sale in September. Also, as you clean out craft or sewing supplies, we always appreciate **donations** of ribbon, rick-rack, buttons, stickers, stamps, yarn, tissue paper, etc., as well as age-appropriate games and puzzles.

A message from Jerry Cornell, facilities director

As a reminder, please do not make adjustments to the setting on the lights, air/heat as they are preset. If you are in a room you can adjust for a three hour interval and then it goes back to its default setting. After meetings, please turn off the lights as you leave the room. Thank you.

October 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<p>Special Notice: The Church Council meeting has been moved from October 24 to October 31 due to scheduling conflicts. The time remains at 6:30pm in Ragan Hall.</p>			<p>1 7-10am Country Breakfast</p>
<p>2 World Communion 9:30am Blood Pressure Check</p>	<p>3 7pm Rejoice Cir.</p>	<p>4 5:30pm T.N.T.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6 9:30am UMW Unit Meeting</p>	<p>7 Logos Regional Training (at St. Luke's)</p>	
<p>9 12:30pm Joanna Circle</p>	<p>10 6:45pm Staff Meeting</p>	<p>11 5:30pm T.N.T.</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 1pm WOW Circle 7pm Susanna Cir.</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15 Festival of Sharing (Sedalia)</p>
<p>16 12:15pm Singles Lunch</p>	<p>17 7pm LIFE Circle 7pm Book Group</p>	<p>18 5:30pm T.N.T.</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20 Wesley Class Trip 9:30am Rebekah & Hannah Circles</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22 9-11:30am Church Conference (Blue Ridge UMC)</p>
<p>23 Stewardship Pledge Sunday</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 5:30pm T.N.T.</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>
<p>30 2-4pm Pumpkin Fest</p>	<p>31 6:30pm Church Council Meeting</p>	<p>Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday</p> <p>8am Prayer Group; 8:30 & 11am Worship; 9:50am Sunday school; 5pm Youth 7pm Boy Scouts 10:45am Contemplative Prayer; 5:30pm TNT Meal; 6pm TNT Studies; 7pm Girl Scouts 9am Quilters; 5pm LOGOS; 6pm Wed. Night Jam; 6:15pm Chancel Chimes; 6:30pm Prayer Group, Gospel Choir; 7:30pm Chancel Choir 7pm Devoted Stitchers, Cub Scouts 7pm Celebrate Recovery</p>				

MINISTRY UPDATES FROM OUR STAFF

A message from Sue Love, missions director

October communion offering will support one of the United Methodist Church Special Sunday Offerings, **World Communion Sunday** (first Sunday of October). Monies collected will be used to help provide scholarships for racial- and ethnic-minority U.S. students and international students, on both undergraduate and graduate levels.



Festival of Sharing is October 15. Kits need to be completed and put in the donation station by October 9. Any financial contributions for the Festival of Sharing, including monies in support of this year's Heifer project, need to be turned in by October 2 to be counted and taken to Sedalia October 15. Don't forget old eyeglasses, sunglasses and reading glasses can be used if you no longer have need for them.

New Leadership Slate Ready for Church Conference Vote

The Nominations Team has completed its task of identifying and recruiting new leaders for 2012 at the Church Conference on October 22 at 9am. Team members who met together many late evenings in August and September to pray, brainstorm, contact and invite the laity to serve were: Mitch Gray, Jerry Keister, Darci Willis, Antonio Booker, Bennie Russ, Sue Burton, Camillie Lester-Young, lay leader Rita Miller and vice chair Wil Abram. Also many thanks, to those who were able to say yes to their call for leadership next year. All have the gratitude of Pastor Lonia and Pastor Emonia.

Hardworking Volunteers

We thank the following volunteers who worked on landscaping, painting and other chores at the church and parsonage on Saturday, September 17: David Odneal, Dan Schmitz, Jim Milburn, Herman Richter, Ed Burr, Kevin Connell, Don Eatherton, Jason Dattilo, Jim Slone, Cal Mosburg, Dave and Judy Arnold, Bob and Sue Love, Wil Abram, Frank Stormer, Garry and Sue Kemp and Jerry Cornell (coordinator).



Scouting

St. Luke's hasn't had a **Girl Scout troop** for a while so we are excited to announce that there may be a troop at our church again - **Troop 708**. Joe and Tammy Long would serve as leaders with Donna Brown serving as a liaison.

Pending a final agreement, the troop will meet on **Tuesdays from 7-8pm** and will serve girls from kindergarten through 18 years. Tell neighbors, friends and family about this troop. All are welcome.

If you are interested in working as a leader or need more information, please contact Joe at 816-588-9867.



Scouts from Boy Scout Troop 110

experienced Railroading Camp this past weekend, September 16 - 18. The camp is held six times a year in Norwood, Kansas. The Scouts worked on repairing the track on Saturday morning. Saturday afternoon included a class that covered train safety, facts and history. The scouts earned the Railroading merit badge while there. At night the scouts slept in Bunk Cars specially outfitted with "three-high" bunk beds. Sunday morning the scouts took a round trip ride on the train.

Staff

Lead Pastor: Lonia Granger Wright
 Associate Pastor: Emonia Barnett
 Pastoral Assistant: Bobbie Stone
 Adult Ministry: Sue Kemp
 Youth Ministry: Jason Dattilo
 Missions: Sue Love
 Community Health: Barb Bruns
 Communications: Angela Fleming
 Office: Andrea McMurry
 Facilities: Jerry Cornell
 Early Childhood: Donna Gregory
 Music Director: Keith Curington

As If For The Very First Time

"... I do want you to experience the blessing that issues from generosity."
Philippians 4:15, The Message

Charles Frazier, in his novel of the American Civil War, Cold Mountain, introduces a minor character, a fiddler whose life is changed through an incident that causes him to look at his musical talents in a whole new way.

The fiddler is a drunk, who knows only six songs. His military unit camps near a house where there's a powerful explosion. A young girl is severely burned and is near death, and her father sends for a fiddler to help ease her way to heaven. The fiddler enters the dark cabin where the young girl suffers in excruciating pain. From her deathbed, she says, "Play me something." He plays a tune. "Play me another." The fiddler plays his drinking tunes slowly, thinking it more appropriate to the circumstances. Soon he has exhausted his small repertoire. "Play me another," she says as she struggles against the pain. "Don't know no more," he says. "That's pitiful," she says, "what kind of a fiddler are you? Make me up a tune then." He marvels at such a strange request. But he has a go at it. Soon the girl passes away. Her father thanks the fiddler for lifting her to heaven with his fiddle.

A transformation takes place, and the author writes, "Time and time again during the walk back to camp the fiddler stopped and looked at his fiddle as if for the very first time. He had never before thought of trying to improve his playing, but now it seemed worthwhile to go at every tune." Thereafter, he never tired of trying to improve his playing, and he went into taverns of every kind to study the sounds and methods of other musicians. "From that day ... on, music came more and more into his mind. ... His playing was as easy as a man drawing breath, yet with utter conviction in its centrality to a life worth claiming."

Imagine the difference he made in the lives of people and the meaning that was added to his own life. That ordinary fiddle and the simple gift of music, when used for higher purposes, became sacred. When the fiddler discovered the gift he had been given, and the power of that gift to influence the world for good, he was changed. His ordinary talent became beautiful, a source of joy and meaning.

We find something similar through the practice of Extravagant Generosity. Giving causes life. Before, our giving may have been arbitrary, perfunctory, haphazard, a little here and there. But when we discover the great difference generosity makes; place it in service to God; and use our resources to relieve suffering, strengthen communities, and restore relationships, then we look at giving entirely differently. We look at our giving, and see it as if for the very first time. We want to improve on our generosity at every turn until it becomes as easy as drawing breath.

Through our generosity, God can do extraordinary things. Through our giving, God changes lives, and in changing them, transforms us.

Our Mission:

To make new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our Vision:

Invite, Grow, Serve.



"A multi-cultural congregation open to all."

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

What's Inside?

Page 1: 2011 Stewardship Drive, Veteran's Day, and Staff Announcement

Page 2: Reflections from Emonia

Page 3: A Word from Pastor Londia

Page 4: Ministry updates from our staff

Page 5: October calendar

Page 6: Staff updates continued

Page 7: Extravagant Generosity

Back: Harvest Pumpkin Fest, Confirmation Class, Baptisms, New Disciples, Security Team Ministry



Start making plans to participate in the **Harvest Pumpkin Fest** which will be on **Sunday, October 30 from 2 to 4pm**. It will be a combination of *Pumpkins in the Park* and *Trunk-or-Treat*. Invite your friends, family and neighbors to come enjoy the pumpkin patch, pumpkin decorating, The Magic Man magician, inflatable bouncer for the kids, cotton candy, games, prize drawings and more. Contact the church office or Gale Russ at 816-966-4544 for additional information or to volunteer to help.

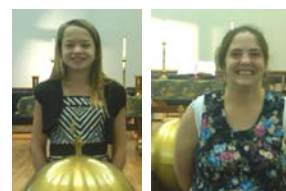
Confirmation Class of 2011

Six students were confirmed during worship on August 28. They were: Ryan Barton, Colin Brown, Ava McMurry, Makayla McNeal, Stevie Houk Watskey and DeVion Thompson.



New Disciples!

On August 28, Ava McMurry and Nikki Dattilo were baptized and joined the church.



CSU: New Security Team Ministry

Rita Miller, lay leader, admires the Parking Lot Patrol sign that will be used by our newly formed security team: Congregational Service Unit (CSU). Vern Wilson will coordinate the following volunteers in providing extra security on our grounds and inside our buildings: Ray Riggs, Ray Roberts, Ed Howe, Ross Worley, Ilati Sipinga, John Childs, Bruce Gregory and Robert Kueck. The team is in the process of developing Standard Operating Procedures for church member and guest safety during fire, earthquake, tornado, entrance and exit from the parking lot, disruptive behavior, and other emergencies. They will train ushers and the congregation on how to reduce risks while on church property. This new ministry originates from a Ministry Security Team seminar held last spring.