



Dear friends,

Happy New Year to you and yours!

I have given myself a single New Year's resolution this year. Each night before I go to bed, I'm going to write down (or type on my phone) just a sentence or two about something that happened during my day that is 'story' worthy. It could be something big, like meeting someone famous, or small, like discovering a little flower in the cracks of the sidewalk.

I got this idea from a book I'm reading called "Storyworthy" (by Matthew Dicks), which is all about how telling our own stories helps us to begin to notice the events in our lives with more detail and enjoyment, rather than letting them pass by and fade away. During these COVID days, I feel like time is flying by like an endless TV reel of static, with little variation or blessing. After only a couple weeks of doing this daily reflection, I'm already starting to feel like I'm living more attentively in the moment and starting to appreciate the significance of even the littlest moments around me. It was not my intention for this to be a spiritual practice, but I do think I've become more aware of God's presence throughout my day while doing it. When you can look back and see God's presence in the past, you will be more prepared next time to notice God's presence in the present, which is Spirituality in a nutshell.

Our lives really are richly blessed by God's goodness, but it's a rare occurrence that we notice and celebrate that goodness. I watched a wonderful, animated Pixar film over Christmas that I recommend to you on this topic (especially if you've got kids in your life). It's called *Soul* and it is available on Disney+. The film follows the interactions between a middle school band teacher who is numb to the goodness of his life and a little disembodied soul that has yet to be convinced that life is actually worth living. One of the morals of the story is to savor this precious life (and God's goodness with it, I'd add) like you might savor every bite of a scrumptious and luxurious meal. I pray that in 2021, amid all the uncertainties we face, we will not only trust God's goodness, but also savor and delight in those blessings with joy and thanksgiving.

Christ's peace,

Pastor Daniel



MISSION & OUTREACH

Food Pantry



We were able to provide a turkey to our regular food pantry clients to help make their Thanksgiving dinners complete. They received the turkey in addition to the regular groceries provided according to family size. All were very appreciative. The cart continues to be put outside the front door to collect non-perishables for the food pantry. Thanks to all who have been helping in this way. Also, a big thank-you to Julie Gvillo's group, A Place of Grace, for 40 hand-made hats for our pantry recipients. What a warm gift!

Good Samaritan Fund



We continue to have people call the church needing help with gas vouchers, rent or utility assistance, etc. The Good Samaritan Fund was started with loose offering when we (seems like ages ago) used to pass the offering plate on Sunday mornings. You can continue to help support this ministry when you make your offerings via check, online, or however. Just add whatever you feel is right for you and indicate that on your offering. Again, thank you on behalf of some of the most vulnerable in our community.

Booth House and Saturday Café



If you have a heart for feeding the hungry, as Jesus taught that we should, helping with meals at the Booth House and/or Saturday Café is a great opportunity for you. The Booth House is a homeless shelter operated by the Salvation Army in Alton. They do not have a meal prepared for them on Sundays. Six times a year we have agreed to prepare the Sunday evening meal to feed the approximately 20 people they may have. During these pandemic times, meals are dropped off and they serve themselves. Saturday Café is a ministry of First Presbyterian in Alton, serving anyone needing a meal. We handle this meal on the first Saturday of March, June, September, and December. Let Brenda Donohoo or Karen Wilson know if you'd be willing to help with this.

Annual Reports and Annual Meeting



Our Annual Congregational meeting to present the 2020 budget and approve changes to Pastor Daniel's terms of call will be Sunday, January 24 following worship. Committees and ministries need to submit their reports for the annual report document by January 10. Those may be submitted to Terri Miller at terri@lovejoyupc.org.

INVITATION FROM PERU

Below is an invitation to participate in an Epiphany celebration in Peru via Zoom. The Zoom link will be forwarded prior to the January 6 event. I hope you'll be able to join the celebration!

Karen Wilson



Chocolatada! A Christmas Celebration from Peru On Zoom January 6, 2021 at 5 pm (CST)



For many of us in the United States, the Christmas season culminates on December 25th. In other parts of the world, like in Peru, the Christmas celebration is only just beginning and then comes to completion on January 6th, Epiphany, when the 3 Kings arrive to the manger.

This day, known as the Bajada de Reyes, is often celebrated with music, small gifts for children, and a chocolatada!

What is a chocolatada? As you might discern from the word, it involves chocolate - namely, hot chocolate!

Our partners in Peru want to celebrate it with us!

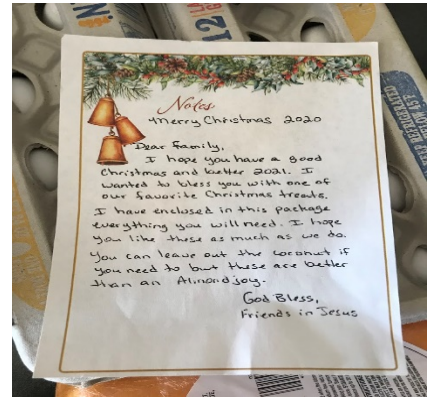
Join us on January 6 at 6pm Peru time (6pm EST/5pm CST in the USA)) to celebrate the arrival of the 3 Kings. We will hear pre-recorded messages and music from partners in Cusco, and San Martin. We will also be joined by Pastor Pedro Pablo Garcia of the House of God Presbyterian Church in Lima. Pastor Pedro has been instrumental in orchestrating dozens of community kitchens in the more impoverished areas of Lima throughout the pandemic and will tell us how Christ has been born into the world again in Peru and how we can honor him from afar with the gifts we have to share. Our mission co-workers in Peru will be hosting the event and translating as needed.

This event is being organized by the Peru Mission Network and our Mission Co-Workers in Peru, Jed Koball and Chenoa Stock who will send out a Zoom link soon.

Well see you then! And don't forget to bring your Hot Chocolate!!!



A Special Christmas Gift



Food ministries have been central to LoveJoy United's mission since our founding. Two Mondays per month, Brenda Donohoo and others give food to our neighbors who are hungry and in need. This food is purchased by church or through donations. But last week, we were in for special surprise from a neighbor.

A family in the Wood River community reached out to the church wishing to supply "groceries for a week" to a family in need. They delivered a generous amount of groceries, but that's not all they brought. They also included the recipes and ingredients to bake their family's favorite sweets. We were able to see that food off to a family that could use it this Christmas. While both families will remain anonymous to one another and to us, there's a sense that they shared Christmas together. And by the grace of God, our church was the meeting place of the two.

What a beautiful and personal way to brighten up the holidays for a family in need. God is so good. And we have some mighty good neighbors.

Brenda Donohoo, who coordinates the food pantry and organized this effort, shared, "I was blessed on Monday to be part of our wonderful mission work and witness such a caring and loving congregation...we are truly blessed with good Samaritans at our church and in our community."

Indeed, we are!

BY PASTOR DANIEL



LoveJoy United gives to community ministries

An update from Sarah Carnes

A month ago, Jeannie McCoy spoke to you about the LoveJoy United Philanthropic Crusaders. The Crusaders job is to recommend to Session how to use the proceeds from the sale of the former College Avenue Presbyterian Church. Our goal is simple, stay true to the church's mission statement and improve our community in any way possible.

The Crusaders have been evaluating LoveJoy United's strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. By connecting those items to our Mission statement, we hope to create a list of projects that help LUPC continue to "joyfully serve through compassion, mission, justice and all-inclusive grace". In a few months, the team will be back to tell you more about large project ideas for 2021 and on, but right now we have exciting news about our first steps.

The team felt very strongly that there is great need in the community right now during the Advent season and that some of this money needed to get out into the Riverbend area before Christmas. The Crusaders also wanted to honor our various church histories with monetary donations to the different organizations we have previously supported. In November, the Session agreed with our proposal and here is what has happened...

As a church we have donated \$1,000 to each of these local missions.

- Crisis Food Center in Alton
- OASIS Women's Shelter
- Community Hope Center
- Overnight Warming Center in Alton
- Roxana School District (Christmas Present fund)
- East Alton Wood River, Hartford School District (Christmas Present Fund)

We are also allocating \$3,500 to be used for the purchase of a washer and dryer for Riverbend Family Ministries in Wood River, which is currently renovating a new facility.

Community Hope Center

COMMUNITY HOPE CENTER IS WHERE HELP AND HOPE ARE FOUND IN ESLS.


Since 1989 CHC has served individuals and families experiencing financial hardship, whether their circumstances are temporary, short term, or long-term. We help by offering groceries, clothing, toiletries, household items, prepared meals, haircuts, and other services free of charge. We share hope by extending friendship, compassion, and encouragement to our clients each time they visit. Our desire is that all who come to Community Hope Center will experience the love of Jesus through our actions.



Overnight Warming Center in Alton


The Overnight Warming Center in Alton is available when temperatures dip below 20 degrees. In addition to a place to sleep, guests will be offered meals and entertainment. Not all guests who come to overnight-warming centers are homeless. Some come to the center because their homes are not bearable in the extreme cold nights.

The LUPC donation of \$1,000 has helped them get closer to their goal this winter season.



Our commitment to children/youth in our community...

Roxana School District and Wood River-Hartford School District \$1,000 each to their Christmas for Kids programs. They supply Christmas presents for in need children in their districts. Both school systems were extremely excited and grateful to receive the gifts and expressed their heartfelt thanks!



Riverbend Family Ministries

The vision at Riverbend Family Ministries is to provide resources for smaller non-profit organizations to work together under one roof, providing families and individuals the tools they need to be self-sufficient. We concentrate our collaborative, holistic efforts on children, youth and families who've experienced trauma, most often due to violence, addiction, poverty and homelessness.



OASIS Women's Center

Oasis Women's Center provides emergency shelter for domestic violence victims and their children.

Margarette Trzachel (a member of LUPC) has been the Executive Director of OASIS for over 40 years. Rev. George Humbert is the President of the Board. OASIS was a supporter of the center from its founding. They were very thankful for the donation.

Margarette told us that our \$1,000 donation will become \$4,000 with a grant that they have in place right now where for every \$1.00 they receive as a donation, it will be matched with \$3.00. A great example of a few fish and loaves of bread multiplying to become enough to "feed" many.



CRISIS FOOD CENTER

It's not hungry and you feel me.

The Crisis Food Center provides a 7 day supply of nutritionally-balanced food once a month to individuals and families who are in need. In addition, they operate the Nearly New Shop, which provides new and gently used clothing to clients at no cost.

Crisis Food Center was first located at the Elm Street Presbyterian Church. We have LUPC members that have been/are volunteers.



The Pulpit Stone



- The Areopagus
- St. Paul Preaching at the Areopagus by Raphael
- The Pulpit Stone at LoveJoy United

One of the “hidden history” treasures of the former College Avenue Presbyterian Church is a marble stone piece that was imbedded in the pulpit of the church. Some have wondered: how did it get there, who put it there and when was it put there? The story is briefly told on page 30 of “The History of COLLEGE AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH” 1837-1987 written by Elder Marie Behymer and with the help of many church members.

The corner stone of CAPC had been laid on November 7, 1926 on the 89th anniversary of the death of College Avenue’s first minister, Elijah Parish Lovejoy. The Mayor of Alton, George D. Davis gave a piece of marble from Mar’s Hill (The Areopagus) to be built into the new building (currently standing now). The location of this piece of marble was left up to the architect who imbedded it in the pulpit.

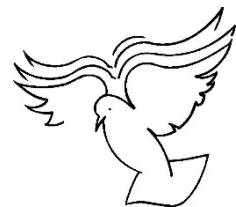
The following is a direct quote from the above-mentioned book which quotes from Rev. John N. Morrison, College Avenue’s pastor at the time of dedication of the new building on November 27, 1927: *“The Silent voice of symbols is no less an addition to the mood of worship. Imbedded in the pulpit of this church is a small stone taken direct from Mar’s Hill (The Areopagus) where the Apostle Paul delivered that famous sermon recorded in Acts 17. This stone, made holy by the touch of the sainted apostle’s weary feet, is a precious treasure which speaks from the remote past to the masses of the present. May we reverence its sacred presence in this sacred place. For we erect not an altar to “an unknown God” but to the God in whom “we live, and move, and have our being.”*

FROM REV. GEORGE HUMBERT

Flight of the Dove by Herbert J. Peel

*In a nest in a tree sits a white dove.
For she looks out over the top of her nest.
She takes flight.*

*As she flies the children of God look up to see her.
She is hope she is saying as she flies.
God the father is with you my children.*



Prayer Concerns

Please keep these people in your prayers and contact those you know to extend a message of support and love.



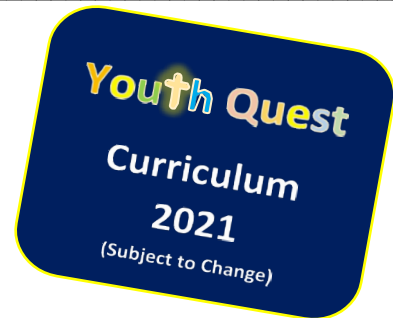
JoAnn Moss, Scott Shelton's Mother, Carol, & his sister, Tina, Mary Trudell, Pat Fletcher, Kate Trudell, Lexie Suerig (Debbie Suerig's daughter), Jim White, Rachel, Ralph Thompson, Terry Allen, Judy Ballard, Alma Cooper, Judy Luck, Mike Harvey (Russ & Lois Thompson's son-in-law), Marian Twigg, Cheryl Stroheck, Shelly Devore (Brenda & Debbie's niece), John Lindquist, Herbert Peel, Terry Tiller (Leukemia), Glenna Donohoo, Katie Davis, Bill Meyers (Neighbor of Henson's), Jama McPeak, Christian (friend of Humberts' who has liver cancer), Nancy Yarnell (friend of Slayden's), Vickie Aldrige, Mike Huff, Patrick Bone, Tollie Family, Jack Kleinert, Mary Ann Roney (Barb Roney's mother), Glenda McDonald, Kathy Testori (Glenda McDonald's sister), Vickie Hastings, Gayla Boehm, Debbie Goskie, Rebecca (Rev. Pam Laing's daughter), Dorothy Kelley, Sam and Sue Taylor (friends of Tim and Nanette Cerny), Larry King, Laura Martin, Daniel (Friend of the Humbert's), Edwin Ehlers (friend of the King's), Coleen Tester.

NURSING HOME RESIDENTS

Rosewood Care Center, Alton Betty Rain, Ron Franke.
Highland Healthcare, Alma Cooper

RETIREMENT HOME RESIDENTS

Integrity Healthcare, Wood River – Herbert Peel
The Cottages of Carlinville, Carlinville – Shirley Martin
Villa Rose, Bethalto – Beth Forrester
Aspen Creek, Troy – Susanne Randall
Cedarhurst, Bethalto – Cliff & Mary Barnes, Shirley Burriss.



JANUARY

- 3 Escape to Egypt *Matthew 2: 13-23*
- 10 John the Baptist *Matthew 11, Mark 1, Luke 3, John 1*
- 17 Jesus is Tempted *Luke 4: 1-13*
- 24 Jesus Goes to Nazareth *Luke 4: 14-30*
- 31 A Storm *Matthew 8: 23-27*

FEBRUARY

- 7 SUPER BOWL SUNDAY???, NO YQ
- 14 The Centurion's Servant *Matthew 8: 5-13*
- 21 Walking on Water *Matthew 14: 22-23*
- 28 The Vineyard Workers *Matthew 20: 1-6*

MARCH

- 7 Jesus Heals Two Blind Men *Matthew 20: 29-34*
- 14 Early Believers *Acts 2: 43-47; 32-37*
- 21 Peter & Tabitha *Acts 9: 36-43*
- 28 Holy Week Stories

APRIL

- 4 EASTER; EGG HUNT???, NO YQ
- 11 Matthias the Apostle *Acts 1: 15-26*
- 18 The Armor of God *Ephesians 6: 11*
- 25 YQ FINALE???, TBA



Birthdays of the Month


















- 02 Maranda Kunst
- 02 Nicholas Daily
- 03 Lee McCoy
- 04 David Hemphill
- 04 Doug Workman
- 04 Karen Huff
- 08 Marian Twigg
- 10 Jeane Slayden
- 11 Mary Ellen Fulkerson
- 13 Jim Laux
- 13 Laura Cerny
- 14 Ralph Thompson
- 17 Cheri Levan
- 17 David Norris
- 18 Lance Dillinger
- 19 Isabella Bauer
- 19 Barbara Scott
- 23 Sherry Ulett
- 23 Drew Belchik
- 26 Rick Buzzard
- 27 Cliff Barnes
- 28 Linda LaMarsh
- 28 Karen Gunter
- 28 Martha Schultz
- 29 Gary Lee Fleming
- 31 Zach Friederich



The sun has risen,
You should rise too.
It is the new day
coming,
That surprise you.

It will be the new
Beginning so
Happy New Year to
you!



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																	
																																																							
3 9:15am Online Adult S.S 10:15am Online Worship 11:15am Called Session 	4 9:00am Food Pantry 	5 6:30pm Online Mission & Outreach Committee 	6 10:15am Online Bible Study 	7 	8 "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." <u>Martin Luther King, Jr.</u>	9 																																																	
10 9:15am Online Adult S.S 10:15am Installation/Ordination of Officers 10:15am Online Worship	11 9:00am Food Pantry 	12 	13 10:15am Online Bible Study 	14 	15 "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." <u>Martin Luther King Jr.</u>	16 																																																	
17 9:15am Online Adult S.S 10:15am Online Worship 4:30pm LUPC Task Force	18 Office Closed 	19 6:00pm Stewardship Meeting	20 10:15am Online Bible Study 	21 6:00pm Online Finance Committee 	22 	23 																																																	
24 9:15am Online Adult S.S 10:15am Online Worship 11:15 Annual Congregational Meeting	25 9:00am Food Pantry 	26 	27 10:15am Online Bible Study 	28 6:30pm Session Meeting 	29 	30 "Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase." <u>Martin Luther King Jr.</u>																																																	
31 9:15am Online Adult S.S 10:15am Online Worship						<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td colspan="7">February 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>28</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </table>	February 2021							S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28						
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