

THE OBSERVER

Dear friends,

I've been feeling a funny feeling the last couple months. I'm not exactly sure what it is, but I'm beginning to think it's hope. This time last year we were facing a crisis of indeterminable length, totally unaware that the worst was yet to come. Now that vaccines are plentiful, the world feels like a more habitable and joyful place. It's been nothing short of life-giving to me to resume seeing so many of you in person - during worship, on home visits, and over lunch. Even my singing group over in St. Louis has resumed for those who are vaccinated. I anticipated it would be years until we could sing again, but here we are. I am grateful. But I continue to think about and pray for other parts of our world where vaccines are still a long way off.

Last month, I met with Jed Koball - one of our mission co-workers in Peru - who will be speaking at a Presbytery meeting over Zoom. He painted a very different reality from the one many of us are now living in the United States. The pandemic continues to ravage so many places in the global south including Peru, Brazil, and India. Hospitals remain full, the virus remains active, and life is still just a shadow of its former self. As we celebrate Independence Day this month in the United States, we remember that we are still deeply interconnected with our brothers, sisters, and siblings across the world. Please continue to pray for the wellbeing of our neighbors around the world who are still battling COVID-19, and seek ways to help.

A favorite hymn of several people in our congregation is "This is My Song," written by the poet Lloyd Stone between the two great world wars that disabused us of any notion

that our lives were disconnected from lives in other nations. I share that hymn with you now as a prayer on behalf of all of God's children, all around the world:

This is My Song

*This is my song, O God of all the nations,
a song of peace for lands afar and mine.
This is my home, the country where my heart is;
here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine;
but other hearts in other lands are beating
with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.*

*My country's skies are bluer than the ocean,
and sunlight beams on cloverleaf and pine.
But other lands have sunlight too, and clover,
and skies are everywhere as blue as mine.
So hear my song, O God of all the nations,
a song of peace for their land and for mine.*

*This is my prayer, O Lord of all earth's kingdoms:
thy kingdom come; on earth thy will be done.
Let Christ be lifted up till all shall serve him,
and hearts united learn to live as one.
So hear my prayer, O God of all the nations:
myself I give thee; let thy will be done.*

In Christ,

Daniel Ervin,
Pastor

Being Matthew 25 people

Merged congregation of LoveJoy United Presbyterian Church takes on racism, poverty and building congregational vitality
by Tammy Warren | Presbyterian News Service



Karen Wilson, Sandy Monroe, the Rev. Daniel Ervin and Mary Cordes in front of the College Avenue Presbyterian Church in Alton, Illinois, which has been sold with proceeds funding Matthew 25 initiatives of the new LoveJoy United Presbyterian Church. (Contributed photo)

LOUISVILLE — As LoveJoy United Presbyterian Church (LUPC) in Wood River, Illinois, lives into its commitment to be a Matthew 25 congregation, it is seeking to empower every church member to discover their individual calling and gifts so they can go forth and serve.

“It doesn’t have to be serving on a committee at church,” said Karen Wilson, a ruling elder and chair of the Mission and Outreach Committee at LUPC. “It can be driving a neighbor to a doctor’s appointment or those kinds of things. You’re out there in the world seven days, not just Sunday mornings or the day the committee meets or whatever.” In February, the session of LUPC accepted the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s invitation and voted to address all three Matthew 25 focus areas: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism and eradicating systemic poverty.

“I think if we all just live by that [Matthew 25] what a world this would be,” said Wilson, adding that deacons are currently making calls to people in their care groups to make sure all — including children — are part of the congregation’s Matthew 25 work. They are also creating local, United States and world maps to show where they are making an impact.

The LUPC congregation was formed through the 2016 merger of College Avenue Presbyterian Church of Alton and United Presbyterian Church of Wood River, about 15

minutes apart. The merged church took its new name from Elijah Parish Lovejoy, the first pastor of Upper Alton Presbyterian Church, the predecessor of College Avenue Presbyterian Church. A pro-slavery mob shot and killed Lovejoy for his strong stance against slavery and for freedom of the press.

The Alton congregation nested with the Wood River congregation for more than a year before discussions of merger began. “They couldn’t have been more welcoming,” Wilson said of United Presbyterian. “We just felt right at home as soon as we got there. It was really a good match for us.”

The congregations voted separately on merger in August 2016 and held their first service as LoveJoy United about a month later.

The former College Avenue congregation sold its building in December 2019, just before the COVID-19 pandemic. LUPC formed a committee — LoveJoy United Philanthropic Crusaders — and gave it the task of recommending to session how proceeds from the sale of the church building in Alton should be used to continue to “joyfully serve through compassion, mission, justice and all-inclusive grace.” United Philanthropic Crusaders — and gave it the task of recommending to session how proceeds from the sale of the church building in Alton should be used to continue to “joyfully serve through compassion, mission, justice and all-inclusive grace.”



As part of Matthew 25 work to address racism, poverty and church vitality, Rev. Daniel Ervin, pastor of LoveJoy United Presbyterian Church (left), and Tom Wyatt (right), present a grant to the Crisis Food Center in Alton, Illinois. (Contributed photo)

Thus far, the Crusaders have received session approval to donate to each of these local missions. They are currently working on other larger project ideas:

Community Hope Center (\$1,000) — serves individuals and families experiencing financial hardship, whether temporary, short-term or long-term. Support includes help with groceries, clothing, toiletries, household items, meals, haircuts and other services to share hope and the love of Christ through action.

Crisis Food Center (\$1,000) — provides one week of nutritionally balanced food monthly, as well as new and gently used clothing, to individuals and families in need.

OASIS Women's Center (\$1,000) — provides shelter for people experiencing domestic violence and their children. The donation from LUPC was quadrupled through a matching grant program.

Overnight Warming Center in Alton (\$1,000) — provides a warm place to sleep and meals when temperatures dip below 20 degrees. Not all guests are unsheltered; some come to the center because their homes are not bearable on extremely cold nights.

Riverbend Family Ministries (\$3,500) — provides resources for small nonprofit organizations to work together from a central location, providing individuals and families holistic support to be self-sufficient after trauma primarily from violence, addiction, poverty and homelessness.

Roxana School District (\$1,000) — provides Christmas gifts for students in need.

Wood River-Hartford School District (\$1,000) — provides Christmas gifts for students in need.

Deacon Mark Russell, a pastor and technology teacher, launched a group of patient, tech-savvy folks who are serving as “tech deacons.” Their mission is to help church members get connected for worship. They walk people through computer connection issues by phone or by visiting their homes.

The Rev. Daniel Ervin began serving as LUPC’s first pastor in October 2017. He grew up in Statesville, North Carolina, and received a bachelor’s in social work with a minor in Spanish at North Carolina State University. He earned a Master of Divinity and a Master of Theology at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, and previously served as a resident minister at First Presbyterian Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

“I was a little bit concerned about how Daniel would relate to the older congregation members,” said Wilson, who served on the pastor search committee. “The little kids like him and the older people love him, too. He’s pretty fantastic.”

**"All who believed were together
and had all things in common;
they would sell their possessions and goods
and distribute the proceeds to all,
as any had need."**

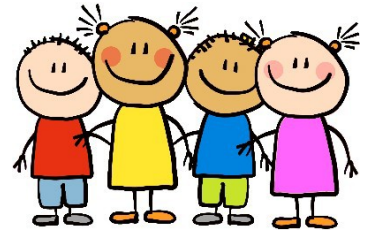
Acts 2:44–45

LUPC Elder Sandy Monroe describes the Matthew 25 vision as giving a congregation wings and a roadmap. “You know, you visit with those in prison. You feed those people who are hungry,” Monroe said. “Matthew 25 tells us what to do if we’re listening, and for a whole congregation to be focused on that — and actually for our entire denomination to be focused on that — what a change we can make in the world.”

This article first appeared in the Presbyterian News Service on June 7, 2021. Here s the link to the original article:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/being-matthew-25-people/>

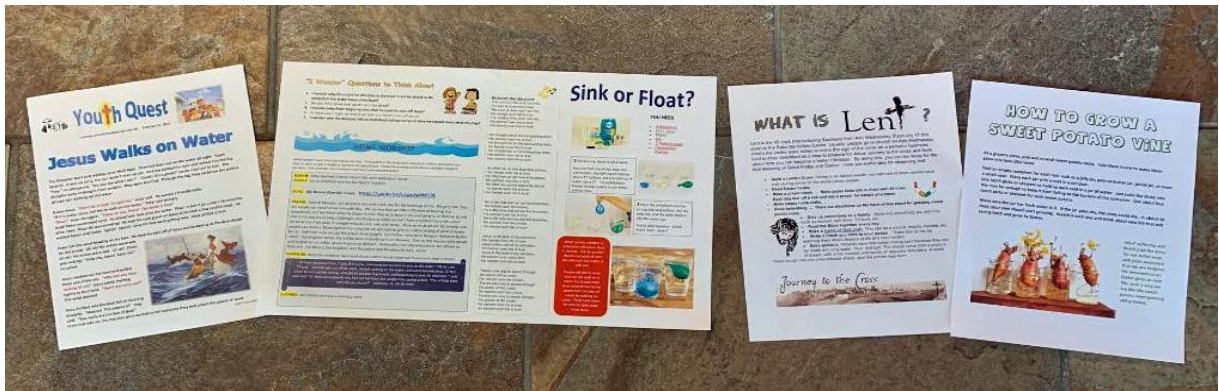
Youth Quest



LESSON MAILINGS

The 2nd Semester has ended so regular weekly Youth Quest lessons have been put on hold. However, there will be periodical mailings once or twice a month throughout the summer months. A new semester will begin on September 12, the Sunday after Labor Day. Hopefully, progress with COVID will allow us to begin meeting in person again with new programming and curriculum.

CONTINUE PRAYERS FOR OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH !



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Due to COVID, it has been decided to NOT have Vacation Bible School this summer with First Presbyterian and St. Paul Episcopal Churches of Alton. However, we are exploring having an event this summer before school starts.

Re-Entry Groups

In an effort to support our community, the Adult Christian Education (ACE) team is offering an opportunity to let each of us be heard and share our experiences and intentions in moving forward through small group experiences, meeting twice a month. Re-Entry Group meeting will be held – **July 6th and 20th at 11AM at the church OR on Zoom**. Our Re-Entry Group is an opportunity to talk about and process the changes the Pandemic has brought to our lives, as well as how we move forward together into the next normal. Hospital Chaplain and Elder, Sandy Monroe, will be facilitating this group. Everyone is welcome to attend. If you are interested, please confidentially email facilitator Sandy Monroe, monroe5216@gmail.com with your preference for meeting day and time. You can call the church office to connect with Sandy. All persons, in and outside of the congregation are welcome to attend.

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Food Pantry

You can drop off non-perishable items for the food pantry on Monday mornings between 9 am and 1 pm. The cart is by the front door. Thanks so much

to those of you who continue to support our food pantry even though we're not in the building on Sunday mornings.

Good Samaritan Fund

As we all know, these are not normal times. If you need some extra help meeting your bills or a gas voucher to make those necessary trips, please know that you can come on Mondays at 1:30 pm and we can help you.

Everything will be confidential. And if you can help support this fund, just mark your check for Good Samaritan Fund. We are here to help one another and those 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.

Prayer Concerns

JoAnn Moss, Scott Shelton's Mother, Carol, & his sister, Tina, Mary Trudell, Kate Trudell, Jim White, Rachel, Terry Allen, Judy Luck, John Lindquist, Herbert Peel, Bill Meyers (Neighbor of Henson's), Nancy Yarnell (friend of Slayden's), Vickie Aldrige, Patrick Bone, Tollie Family, Glenda McDonald, Kathy Testori (Glenda McDonald's sister), Gayla Boehm, Dorothy Kelley, Laura Martin, Daniel (Friend of the Humbert's), Edwin Ehlers (friend of the King's), Dorothy Freeman (Joe Freeman's mother), Annabel Gibson, Deborah (friend of Paula Blair), Maurice and Susie Musgrave, Marian Twigg, Jennifer and Waymon Taylor (family of Brenda Gremlie), Bill and Susan Nesmith (family of Tanya Sisk), Jeff Loyet (friend of Humberts), Sylvia Porter (neighbor of Sandy Franke), Bob Wilson, David Doersam (Lisa Hemphill's brother), Pat Fletcher, Larry King, Katie Davis, Sandy Krug, Mark Russell, Cheryl Strohbeck.

Nursing Home Residents

Riverside Care Center, Alton - Ron Franke.

Stearns Nursing & Rehab, Granite City - Christine Cunningham

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 Burris

A Friend

Two are better than one
Single is so lonely
Things are better when another is
added to one
Come and join me friend
We shall have fun
We shall help each other
We shall hang out
Assist each other with chores
Discuss many things
As God the Father wanted
We shall be friends
-Herbert Peel

JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Logan Inlow
- 1 Alaina Frankford
- 1 Jennifer Hooker
- 2 Beth Mabb
- 2 Neil Huff
- 3 Aubree Leggett
- 3 Hannah Carnes
- 6 Kimberlee Belchik
- 6 Sarah Carnes
- 7 James Klette
- 7 Donna Crawford
- 9 Allyson Klette
- 9 Larry Abraham
- 9 Karen Wilson
- 9 Peggy Hagaman
- 12 Linda Duncan
- 12 Mark Utnage
- 13 Judith Hazelwonder
- 15 Evan Leggett
- 15 Ryan Leggett
- 17 Carolyn Cook
- 18 Ann Cook
- 19 Stephanie Trudell
- 20 Nanette Cerny
- 23 Dee Howe
- 23 Mallory Slayden
- 24 Misty Davis
- 25 Reagan Lynn
- 27 Karen Cerny
- 28 Phyllis Suhre
- 29 Jeff Frankford
- 29 Ronald Franke
- 30 John Shugert
- 31 Alyssa Kudelka

Many Ways to Worship

We continue to gather in several ways at 10:15 AM on Sunday mornings as God's worshipping people. We hope you will join us online, by phone, or in-person. All three are good and faithful ways of worshipping. Online: Go to lovejoyupc.org/live and click 'connect Via Zoom.'

Phone: Dial +1 (669) 900-6833 and then at the prompt enter: 611 784 858# (long distance rates may apply)

In Person: Participants are asked to remain masked and refrain from singing during the service. We can

accommodate up to 50 people in-person. Zoom Adult Sunday School meets at 9 – 9:45 AM. Connect online or by phone according to the instructions above.

Tech Deacons are available to help you get connected online or by phone. Call the church office for information.



July 2021



July

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				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	29	30	31

August

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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
29	30	31				

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>27</p> <p>9a Zoom Adult Sunday School</p> <p>10:15a Hybrid Worship</p> <p>6:30p Movie Night</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>9a Food Pantry</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>10:15a Zoom Bible Study</p> <p>7p Online Evening Meeting</p>	<p>7/1</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p 9a</p> <p>Bell Choir Practice</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Office Closed - Daniel is available by appointment</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>4</p> <p>9a Zoom Adult Sunday School</p> <p>10:15a Hybrid Worship</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Church Office Closed for Holiday</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>6:30p Mission and Outreach Meeting</p> <p>11a Re-Entry Group Meeting</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>10:15a Zoom Bible Study</p> <p>7p Online Evening Prayer Meeting</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>9a Bell Choir Practice</p> <p>3p Presbytery Gathering</p> <p>Planning Team at LUPC</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Office Closed -Daniel is available by appointment</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11</p> <p>9a Zoom Adult Sunday School</p> <p>10:15a Hybrid Worship</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>9a Food Pantry</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>6:30p Children and Youth Christian Ed Meeting</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p 10:15a</p> <p>Zoom Bible Study</p> <p>1p ACE Committee</p> <p>7p Online Evening Prayer Meeting</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>9a Bell Choir Practice</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Office Closed -Daniel is available by appointment</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>18</p> <p>9a Zoom Adult Sunday School</p> <p>10:15a Hybrid Worship</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>6p Finance Meeting</p> <p>11a Re-Entry Group Meeting</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>10:15a Zoom Bible Study</p> <p>7p Online Evening Prayer Meeting</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>9a Bell Choir Practice</p> <p>6:30p Session Meeting</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Office Closed - Daniel is available by appointment</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>25</p> <p>9a Zoom Adult Sunday School</p> <p>10:15a Hybrid Worship</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>9a Food Pantry</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>10:15a Zoom Bible Study</p> <p>7p Online Evening Prayer Meeting</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Office Hours 9a-2p</p> <p>9a Bell Choir Practice</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Office Closed - Daniel is available by appointment</p>	<p>31</p>



LoveJoy United
Presbyterian Church
A WELCOMING, NURTURING,
PRAYING COMMUNITY OF FAITH

2550 Rock Hill
Road Wood River,
IL 62095 Phone:
618-254-5880
Fax: 618-254-1288

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

