



The Chronicle

ST. LUKE'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

DECEMBER 2014/JANUARY 2015

Inside This Issue:

From Rev. Janet.....	2
From Rev. Ryan.....	3
From Rev. Sallie.....	3
Children's Ministry.....	6
Missions.....	8 & 9
SLY.....	10
Music & Drama.....	11
Team Kick Off.....	12

and much more!



Join One of Our Christmas Eve Teams!

Come serve Dec. 24 at 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00 or 9:00pm

Greeters: Welcome all to St. Luke's. We will need you here 20 minutes prior to the service. Contact Lisa Phillips lisaphill4@aol.com

Ushers: Assist in welcoming and with various duties during the service. Will need you here 20 minutes prior to the service. Contact Shawn Slade shawnrslade@gmail.com

CandleBin Team: Help replace and organize the small candles we distribute for the services. 20 minute time slots beginning at 3:15pm, 4:15pm, 5:15pm, 6:15pm Contact Lynda Fickling 303-791-0659 x20 lynda@stlukeshr.com

Parking Lot Attendants:

Help direct traffic in our parking lot for any of the services. Contact Lynda Fickling 303-791-0659 x20 lynda@stlukeshr.com



Create Stories of Change

Revs. Janet, Sallie, Ryan, and Sarah are challenging you to give 10% of what you spend on Christmas gifts to create a story of change. What kind of gift can you give, or donation can you invest, or relationship can you enhance that will make a difference and increase the common good? Can you be a partner with God in loving people, or creatures, or creation? Gather the members of your family and dream together about a place to bless. Create a story of change!

A Story that Changes Everything: ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AT ST. LUKE'S

This is the season of incarnation... when God chooses to dwell among us. During Advent, we'll tell the story from two vantage points:

- Through the eyes of the first family, we remember the first Christmas story.
- Through contemporary eyes, we'll see that Love comes down to live among us every day.

The incarnation is a story of transformation, both then and now, that changes everything. The stories illumine us and make us glow with the Presence we've always wanted.

*What came into being
through the Word was life,
and the life was the light for all people.
The light shines in the darkness, and
the darkness doesn't extinguish the light.
—John 1: 4-5*

December 18

Little School
Christmas Program
PAA Holiday Festival

December 20

Puppet Show

December 21

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Candy Cane Sunday

December 24

Christmas Eve Services
1:00 & 3:00 Children's Services
5:00 & 7:00 Traditional Services
9:00 Communion Service

December 28

First Sunday of Christmas
Enjoy Family Worship
(No Sunday School)

January 4, 2015

Epiphany Sunday
Procession of the Kings

Advent Stories Bring LIGHT!



Advent is here—surrounding us with its celebrations, quiet reflection, warmth, cheer and yes, sometimes, chaos! Let us embrace the season and cherish our Advent stories: From Sunday School Advent Wreath Candle Lighting to our first-ever Tree Lighting Christmas Pageant, from our beautiful UMW Candlelight Dinner to the Shine Christmas Party, from *Amahl & the Night Visitors* to Family Advent Devotionals, from a Singing Joseph to College Care Boxes and our amazing Cantata and SO much more - this magical season is in full swing and gives us reason to smile, to bask in relationship and to remember an ancient story that changes everything. Let it transform us and fill us with the light of hope, peace, love and joy to root our stories as they continue to grow into the season of Epiphany.

Sunday Worship Services:

8:00am, 9:30am, 11:00am,
Contemplative Service
(Check website for dates & times)

Sunday School:

Adult, Youth & Children:
9:30am & 11:00am

Nursery available for:

8:00, 9:30 & 11:00am services

Church Office.....303-791-0659

Fax.....303-470-5615

Email.....office@stlukeshr.com

Website.....www.stlukeshr.com

Preschool Office.....303-791-1982

**Staff:**

Rev. Dr. Janet Forbes.....x13
Senior Minister Emergency: 303-241-9312

Rev. Dr. Sallie Suby-Long.....x32
Associate Minister Emergency: 303-475-0141

Rev. Ryan Canaday.....x12
Associate Minister Emergency: 303-944-5061

Rev. Pat Shaffer.....720-988-5430
Visitation Pastor

Rev. Sarah Merchant.....Pastoral Intern
Sharon Oliver.....x27
Director of Children's Ministry

Samantha Leahy.....x40
Director of Early Childhood Ministry

Stephanie Kirk.....x11
Children's Ministry Coordinator

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Director of Youth Ministry

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Director of Little School

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Director of Music & Arts Ministries

Kenrick Mervine.....x33
Associate Director of Music Ministry & Organist

Jennifer Ferguson.....x37
Associate Director of Music Ministry

Kay Coryell.....x36
Director of Handbells & Children's Music Ministry

Brenda Schafer.....x10
Office Administrator

Sheri Henry.....x24
Director of Finance

Kristi Pawley.....x16
Accounting Clerk

Lynda Fickling.....x20
Director of Servant Ministry/Spiritual Director

Barry Curtis.....x39
Facilities Manager

All submissions for the
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of *The Chronicle* are due Jan. 20
Editor: Sharon Oliver
chronicle@stlukeshr.com

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To receive *The Chronicle* via US mail,
please call or email the Church Office.



Rev. Janet Forbes
Senior Pastor

Come to the Manger: A Cribbing We Will Go

It is mid-December of the year 1223. In a natural cave, the monk, Francis, prepares a manger filled with hay. There is a mother and a father. Alongside is an ox and a donkey. After the lighting of candles and much singing, Francis speaks about the nativity of Jesus in Bethlehem.

Thanks to St. Francis, the crèche has become a family activity. Children like to arrange the figures of Mary and Joseph in the stable. The shepherds are moved closer to the stable each day in anticipation of the birth. In some families, baby Jesus remains hidden until Christmas morning, when the children discover him in the manger. Sometimes the wise men begin their approach toward Bethlehem after the star appears, arriving at the stable on Epiphany. You might keep the ancient custom of "cribbing", visiting the manger scenes of other families. The "crib" is another name for the manger, the feeding trough that becomes the first cradle for the baby.

Make sure that your family has a nativity set on the coffee table or under the tree. If you have small children, make sure they have a nativity set to play with, even if Jesus gets lost under the sofa, or the donkey loses an ear, or Elsa, Anna, and Olaf join the shepherd visitors.

Everyone comes to the manger at Christmas. This is the portrayal of a human family. And somehow, in the mystery of Emmanuel, God-with-us, our lives are illumined. *"The true light, which enlightens everyone, is coming into the world."*—John 1: 9

O God, prepare our hearts to receive the Grace found in a Christmas crib. **Amen.**



WORSHIP IN THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY

Roots: Grounding Our Story



The word, Epiphany, means the appearance of light. In Christian thought, the appearance of light reached its peak in the life and teachings of Jesus.

Nowhere else in the New Testament is there a clearer picture of the radical nature of how to follow the light of Jesus than the Sermon on the Mount. This collection of Jesus' teachings is found in the first book of the New Testament, Matthew, chapters 5-7.

During the season after Christmas, Revs. Ryan, Janet, and Sarah will explore the more challenging invitations of these teachings: What is true happiness? Can I really love my enemies and pray for them? What about judging and forgiveness? What did Jesus mean when he taught us to pray his prayer?

When we dig deeply into these learnings, we discover the root images, convictions, and commitments of the stories that we live and tell. What are the spiritual practices that enhance my ability to live in harmony with my deepest self? Is there a spiritual resolution for my New Year?

**Join us for worship at 8:00, 9:30
and 11:00am in the Sanctuary
from January 11 to February 15,
2015 for ROOTS: GROUNDING
OUR STORY.**

Our Christmas Offerings to the Benevolence Fund

Through our Benevolence Fund, we have the opportunity to share with those less fortunate. Our Christmas offering will help bring the gift of this season to the St. Luke's benevolence funds that allow us to respond to the needs of the at-risk, the homeless, the transient, and the traveler for short-term lodging, food certificates, gas vouchers, prescriptions, and bus fares.

If there is a need, these funds support the ministry of our pastoral intern for the Iliff School of Theology, covering the expense of internship fees and books.

These funds also provide our partnership with Love In the Name of Christ, a coalition of 25 churches in the Littleton and Highlands Ranch area which connects neighbors in need with existing resources, mobilizes church volunteers when helping hands are needed, and brings groups together to create solutions. Be sure to connect with the Renewed Treasures Resale Shop, our gap ministry on behalf of the Love, INC partnership!

Together, our generosity will make a difference in the lives of many persons in 2015. Thanks be to God!



Rev. Ryan Canaday
Associate Minister

What Kind of Story Will You Live in 2015?

2015 is coming! What would it mean for you to live a good story in the new year?

What would it look like? What hopes do have? What do you long for? What are the things that might be worth letting go? What things in your life might need to change in order to live a more meaningful story?

While sitting with a group of friends the other night around the table, we discussed the joys and difficulties of marriage and relationships. In our relationships we experience heartache and disappointment, but in these same relationships we also experience profound joy and deep satisfaction. When it comes to my relationship with my wife, Tami, I am thankful for lots of things. Perhaps the thing I am most grateful for is this: I know Tami is for me. Now, before going on I should make clear: this relationship is not absent of conflict—real conflict. We don't always see the world the same way. We miscommunicate. We argue. We say things to each other that we later regret. We don't always get it right... and we're becoming better at acknowledging this. But in all of this I still know beyond a shadow of a doubt that Tami is for me. It's not just that she's for me, she's for us! She wants our marriage to thrive. She wants us to love together, hurt together, make decisions together, make mistakes together, parent together... to be in IT together. Plain and simple: Tami has my back.

Do you have people like this in your life? It doesn't have to be a marital relationship. Life-giving relationships can be found in friends, family members, colleagues, mentors, and others. They are the people who at the end of the day you can say: "He has my back. She wants me to thrive. He is for me." Surround yourself with these people. They will be your greatest cheerleaders. They will celebrate in the deepest ways with you. They will also be the ones who will challenge you, who will ask you the hard questions. But you'll be able to hear it because you trust them... because you know they are for you, that they are fighting for you to live a good story. And this is huge! Because there are lots of people who aren't for you. They're the ones who cut and critique, belittle you and quietly smirk when you stumble. They love to watch you fail, and are filled with envy when you succeed. These people are not for you. They likely aren't for themselves (which is really sad...and also an entirely separate article.)

Maybe living a good story in 2015 means that we choose wisely the relationships in which we invest. And engaging in some tough self-reflection regarding some of the ways in which we behave in our relationships, and some of the ways in which we respond in our world.

For some of us, living a good story in 2015 will mean clinging to a God who we know is for us. Yes, God is for humanity! God is for us! I am constantly amazed at the number of people I encounter who fundamentally believe that God is against them, that God takes some kind of delight when they fall, that God secretly wants them to be unhappy and miserable—that they actually deserve it. No! God is for you! God is for me! God is for us! This is what the birth of Jesus is about. As author and theologian Richard Rohr reminds us: "The Incarnation was already the redemption, because in Jesus' birth God was already saying that it was good to be human, and God was on our side."

So take heart friends. God is for you. Rest in that and surround yourself with others who are for you. This might just help you live the most meaningful story possible. Now if I may take a moment and remind myself... because I need the constant reminder as much as you do. Ryan, take heart. God is for you. Rest in that and surround yourself with others who are for you. This might just help you live the most meaningful story possible.

2015. What kind of story will you live?—Grace & Peace, Rev. Ryan



Rev. Dr. Sallie Suby-Long
Associate Minister

Kindness Matters

"Kindness and compassion are among the principle things that make our lives meaningful."

—Pierro Ferrucci, *The Power of Kindness*

Thank you for all the ways you reach out to offer kindness and compassion. It really does matter. Kindness makes a difference in others lives but it also makes a significant difference in our own lives. As the Dalai Lama shares in the preface to *The Power of Kindness*, "On a simple, practical level, kindness creates a sense of warmth and openness that allows us to communicate much more easily with other people. That generates a spirit of friendship in which there is less need to hide what we feel. As a result, feelings of fear, self-doubt and insecurity are automatically dispelled. What is more, there is increasing evidence that creating positive mental states like kindness and compassion definitely leads to better psychological health and happiness".

So, it appears there is actually a necessity for kindness! And I am quite certain that you already know this based on your kindness toward one another and our community. I believe St. Luke's ministries of care and spiritual formation contribute to the emotional, mental, and spiritual health of both givers and receivers. And those roles are inextricably woven together. They are one and the same. I welcome your calls, emails, texts, and conversations about any of our care ministries.

—Pastor Sallie Suby-Long, sallie@stlukeshr.com, 303-475-0141

St. Luke's Care & Spiritual Formation Ministries

Pastoral Counseling and Care –

Rev. Sallie, Rev. Janet, Rev. Ryan, and Rev. Pat offer short-term, faith-based counseling, pastoral care, and referrals for individuals, couples, and families seeking support.

Stephen Ministry –

provides confidential, one-to-one care to individuals in our congregation and community. Stephen Ministers are lay persons who have specialized training in listening and providing emotional and spiritual care. Contact a pastor or Stephen Leader if you or someone you love would benefit from this ministry.

The Caring Connection –

provides support to members of St. Luke's and the community by making companion visits, taking meals to families in need, running errands or providing transportation. Contact Maryellen Davis if you have a need that the Caring Connection may provide.

Prayer Team –

gathers regularly to pray for concerns of individuals, the congregation, and the community. Requests for prayers may be sent through the website, written on a prayer request card or shared with a member of the pastoral and staff team.

Support Groups and Classes

– St. Luke's offers support groups and classes focused on a variety of topics including 12-step programs, divorce recovery classes, families of loved ones in prison, career transition, grief support groups, and parenting classes. Information about current groups is available on St. Luke's website and in the Care Ministries brochures in the church entry.

Center for Spiritual

Engagement – interactive workshops, retreats, seminars and classes featuring excellent facilitators, outdoor experiences, discussions etc. engage participants in learning new skills and practices that contribute to health and wholeness. Check the website and Week at a Glance for upcoming opportunities. See upcoming opportunities listed in this issue of *The Chronicle*!

Spiritual Direction and

Mentoring – The process of spiritual direction honors each person's unique life journey and supports people in managing transitions, enhancing self-awareness, working through challenges, and growing in faith. Contact Rev. Sallie or Lynda Fickling and we'll connect you with one of our trained/certified Spiritual Directors.

Faithful Friends – The Faithful Friends ministry offers care and friendship to individuals in care centers, those who may be dealing with long term health challenges, and individuals who may have difficulty getting to St. Luke's on a regular basis. You may contact Nancy Abbott or the Church office for more information.

The Samaritan Fund – provides financial support and assistance for those who are part of our St. Luke's family. If you or someone you love is in need of extra financial support to make it through a difficult stretch, please contact one of the pastors.

Benevolence Fund – provides support for those in need who are not directly connected with the St. Luke's family.



Lynda Fickling
Director of
Servant Ministry/
Spiritual Director

Get CONNECTED

Join us for an in depth look at the Community of St. Luke's & The United Methodist Church.

9:30am • Room 212
Sunday, January 11



We look forward to getting to know you!

(NEW!)

Financial Peace University Beginning January 15

Michelle Mostowy and Sharon Williams will be presenting Dave Ramsey's FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY beginning January 15 from 6:30-8:30pm in the Chapel.

We all need a plan for our money. Financial Peace University (FPU) is that plan! This isn't your typical "money class." FPU is practical, entertaining and fun. It will show you how to get rid of debt, manage your money, spend and save wisely, save for the future and give like never before. FPU teaches God's way of handling money and is based on more than 800 verses of Scripture. It is a proven plan that will work for you.

More than 1.5 million families and individuals have taken FPU. The average family completing the course pays off \$5,300 and saves \$2,700 in just 90 days.

To register for the class, visit www.daveramsey.com. Click on Find a Class, search for St. Luke's United Methodist Church, and click to register. For info contact: Sharon Williams: sharonewilliams@juno.com or 303-470-0034 Michelle Mostowy: michelle.mostowy@gmail.com.

We have completed the portrait sessions at the church for the pictorial directory.

Appointments are still available at the studio. Call Bettinger's studio at 303-733-6076. Things are winding down until the directories arrive in the spring so, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those that have helped in this endeavor. First, thank you to all those who have had their photographs taken already. It takes all of us to make this a success. Mr. Ken Fong has been a tremendous help. He did our internet links to Bettinger's Studio, took pictures for those who could not come out and filmed and edited the skit. Thank you, Ken, for all your help. Thanks also goes to Dr. Jim Ramsey. He graciously gave up his office and choir room for over a week. Hope we didn't make too much of a mess Thanks to Lindy Howard, Karen Meade, Judy Dearasaugh, Tennie Christman, and Mary Baldwin for all their help with signing people up for appointments and then signing people in for their portraits. The work could not have been done without help from these lovely ladies. Thank you to Brenda Schafer for all her long hours on the mailings. Also, thanks to Brenda and Lynda Flicking for patience with my questions. And a big thanks to our actors and actress, McKay Smith, Quinten Alderson and Clay Antinoro. A thank you to Rev. Janet for her fine portrayal of herself. Also, thank you to Melanie Kirkpatrick for finding our actors and the moms who took time to drive the kids to the filming. —Debbie Hofer

(NEW!) Learning With St. Luke's Classes for 2015!

Pick up a LWSL pamphlet at church or go online to see more details on classes and how to get involved, but here's just a few of the new class offerings to choose from:

(NEW!) STORYLINE (8-week class - 4 different groups!)

(NEW!) A PLACE AT THE RIVER: STORIES TO INSPIRE FAITH IN ACTION (series of 5-week classes)

(NEW!) A BETH MOORE BIBLE STUDY (11-week classes for women)

(NEW!) THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Monty Hoffman will facilitate this class that looks at history and beliefs of Methodism. All are welcome! (Jan. 11 & 18 at 11:00am)

(NEW!) THE BIBLE FROM SCRATCH: THE NEW TESTAMENT FOR BEGINNERS (8-week class)

Storyline: Going Deeper *by Stephanie Kirk*

Rev. Ryan has been talking about this "Storyline" phenomenon for a while now, and I'm so excited to see it catching on in our community! I was excited, if not a bit nervous, to explore my own story in a deeper way. The 8-week series of conversation and exploration gave me an opportunity to look at my own history and identify some of the defining moments that I hadn't put words to previously. Not only did I look back over my story to see how God had helped author it this far, but it really gave me some "perspecticles" to look through as I dream and plan for the next chapters. I believe that this process is inviting our entire congregation into deeper relationships; with ourselves, our spouses, our kids, our families, our friends, our community, and especially, our God. I encourage and invite you to join in and participate in this experience as you are ready and able. We have new groups starting this spring and will continue to offer this opportunity as long as we have facilitators who are excited to lead and participants who are excited to explore. Take this chance to re-read your story and open yourself to the chapters that are still being drafted!

Here's how you can go deeper:

- 1. Join a Group!** We'll have at least six new groups starting between January and March and want to invite you to find a group that works for you! These rolling starts allow for people to pick a day and time that works best for their schedule, and the eight-week commitment gives a great time frame for people to plan within. Sign up sheets will be available in the Fellowship Hall until the groups are filled.
- 2. Baby sit for a Group!** While we will offer a few groups that coincide with nursery availability at St. Luke's, there are some groups that will be meeting at times that are not covered by childcare at the church. We want Storyline to be accessible to ALL members and don't want childcare to be a prohibitive cost. If you are interested in volunteering two hours of your time each week for eight weeks to babysit for a group as they meet, please contact Rev. Ryan and he'll get you in touch with our small group leaders.
- 3. Let us know you're interested!** Are you excited about the idea of Storyline, but none of the meeting times work for you? Or maybe you're not in a place to make the time commitment at the moment? No worries! Shoot Rev. Ryan an e-mail and he will add you to our "interested parties" list. As new groups form, Ryan will e-mail this list of folks to let them know and keep them apprised of the added times/dates so they can sign up when a group works for them. Please contact Rev. Ryan if you are thinking about possibly joining a group, but you'd like to talk to a facilitator or former participant first to get a first hand account of the work and how it impacted them — we have LOTS of folks who have been touched by this experience and are happy to share what they've learned about themselves through the process!

Are you in a career transition in your life,

either seeking a different position or searching for employment? St. Luke's is starting a Career Transition Group to provide information on the different steps in a current employment search including resume writing, networking, writing a LinkedIn profile, and interviewing. Besides offering advice on these steps in the process, the group will also focus on encouraging and uplifting each other during this stressful time in our lives. If you are interested, please contact Ron Miller at ronmiller74@gmail.com.



Our Mission:

To promote healing and wholeness by creating opportunities for authentic connection, and by providing experiences that inspire and transform.

Please visit our new website www.stlukesce.org to learn about upcoming opportunities and explore our photo gallery.

Spirituality and Wellness Speaker Series:

- Join us on Tuesday, February 3, 2015 (6:30 – 8:00) in the St. Luke's Fellowship Hall for an evening with Pennie Hunt, speaker, author, and "Communicator of Life Lessons". After a series of life changing events, Pennie left her career as the leader of a state-wide nonprofit to begin writing and speaking about how to change, heal and empower your life! Pennie has married her own life lessons with her gift of communication to help others journey through this life with spirit, courage and compassion. In this session you will learn life-changing strategies from Pennie's own journey, as she encourages us to "Love Our Life No Matter What!" For more information, contact Renaeparra@aol.com. Childcare is available with a reservation (sam@stlukeshr.com).
- In November Kimba Ashworth, Certified Eating Psychology Coach, gave us tips to prepare for the coming Holiday season. So often the happy expectations around sharing time (and Food) with family and friends are dulled by self-judgment and the dread of those extra pounds we may confront on January first. In the survey results from this engaging session participants overwhelmingly agreed they learned new strategies to deepen connections with friends, family, and Spirit through eating together. If you'd like to view the video of this session, contact Rev. Sallie at sallie@stlukeshr.org.



Outdoor Adventure Ministry:

- November 22 was a gem of a day, tucked in between days of chilly winds and early Colorado snow. We climbed Spruce Mountain near Larkspur to enjoy the views of Pikes Peak, the Palmer Divide, and the dramatically sculpted limestone sides of this beautiful mesa. Lunch at Spur of the Moment in Larkspur gave us time to connect with one another. We are planning new adventures for the spring of 2015 and welcome your ideas for new destinations and activities. Please visit our Photo Gallery at www.stlukesce.org to learn more about us. To join our mailing list, contact janestaller@gmail.com



Classes and Experiences:

- (NEW!) Embracing Spirituality** will begin a new 8-week session on Thursday, February 5! This book-based small group class is intended to strengthen our spirit and soul. Classes will run 6:30-8:00pm. Watch the St. Luke's Bulletin for the book selection for this session. For more information, contact Sam Leahy (sam@stlukeshr.com), Renae Parra (renaeparra@aol.com), or Jenita Rhodes (jenita@pcsys.net).
- Save the date! Saturday, May 2 - World Labyrinth Day. Come learn more about the role of labyrinths in spiritual practice, and walk the St. Luke's labyrinth.
- Mindful Presence Meditation** is a short meditation experience that supports our ability to be unconditionally present to our breathing, core, thoughts and emotions. We hope you'll start your week with the Moments of Reflection on our website and seek inspiration in our archives. For more information and to discuss your opportunity, contact sam@stlukeshr.com.

First Steps Spirituality:

First Steps was honored to be a mission beneficiary of the UMW Candlelight Dinner on Dec. 2. As a dinner speaker Jenita Rhodes described the history and purpose of First Steps, and Sharon Oliver, Sam Leahy, and Gail Abernathy shared stories of how First Steps is being integrated into our Children's Ministry. We are so grateful for the generosity of the UMW membership, who made direct donations to First Steps and also purchased many Prayer Beads. (100% of proceeds from Prayer Bead sales support First Steps.) Opportunities for training in First Steps methodologies and Holy Listening will be available in the Spring of 2015. For more information, contact Rev. Sallie at sallie@stlukeshr.com.

Planning for Cold Weather Closures

In the event of inclement weather, the pastors and staff of St. Luke's have adopted these procedures:



During the week:

- When North Douglas County cancels school, St. Luke's will close the church office and cancel all classes, meetings, and events in the building. All childcare for the day will be cancelled.
- When North Douglas County schools announce an early dismissal, St. Luke's will close the office and cancel all afternoon and evening classes, meetings, and events.
- If there is no school closure, but weather conditions are becoming severe, staff and group leaders will determine by 4:00pm if evening classes, meetings, and events will be cancelled.
- When North Douglas County delays the start of the school day, St. Luke's will open at the normal time (8:00am). All classes, meetings, and events will continue as scheduled.

On weekends and holidays:

- The church staff and group leaders will determine whether classes, meetings, and events will be held.

All closures will be posted on the St. Luke's website (www.stlukeshr.com) as soon as a decision is made. The closure of the St. Luke's Little School will also be given to local television and radio stations.

Remembering Silas Soule

by Betsy Keyack



It was cold at dawn today, Dec. 3, at the grave site of Captain Silas Soule. Ken and I were at a vigil, led by Native Americans, recognizing Captain Soule for his courage. Soule was a young man in his 20's serving in the US Army in 1864. He was ordered by his superior, Col. John Chivington, to participate in the massacre of peaceful Native Americans at Sand Creek in southeastern Colorado. Captain Soule refused to let his men participate in the killing. Later Soule wrote a letter to a higher superior telling the story of what happened on that fateful day. Less than a year later, after giving testimony at a military investigation, he was assassinated in Denver. At the vigil, participants in the annual Sand Creek Healing Run were anointed as they prepared to run or walk the last leg of the Healing Run from Riverside Cemetery to the Capitol steps. Native Americans of the Cheyenne, Arapaho and other tribes sang in their languages accompanied by drums and expressed their deep appreciation for Silas Soule. One Native American performed a special blessing on us all. As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, Silas Soule reminds me of the One who came and showed us how to live. Soule had the courage to stand by his convictions at great personal risk. He had the courage to tell the truth - not just tell the truth when asked, but having the courage to speak up with the truth contrary to the prevailing views at the time. What an example!



Woof! Woof! Meow! Jake, Max, and Shea here to bring you up to speed on what we are sniffing out for children at St. Luke's.

Sunday School at St. Luke's - A Chance for Kids to Learn About and Experience God's Love

Each Sunday morning we try to create an atmosphere that gives children the opportunity to grow closer to God. We do it through Bible stories, prayer, discussion, Holy Listening, friendships and fun. We're packing lots of great learning into our Sundays in 2015 about living like Jesus taught us and MORE! It's a great year - full of sharing God's love! Join in at ANY time. You can register online.



We Have Openings beginning Jan. 2015 to Serve in Sunday School! Check out our NEW Online Servant Sign Up & Schedule!

Thanks to all who have gone online www.stlukeshr.com/children to sign up. It's fast, easy and a great way to double check when you serve. Come serve with us - one Sunday or lots! We need to fill 25 servant spots each week(!) so there's plenty of room for all. **WE NEED YOU! Especially PEAK workshop leaders.** Come and share your gifts with our children.

Love & Logic Parenting Classes Three



Thursdays, Jan. 22, 29 & Feb. 5

6:00-8:30pm. \$69/person, contact suzanne@justshutterup.com to register

Mark your calendars:

- Dec. 17 - Family Advent Devotional 6:00pm
- Dec. 21 - Candy Cane Sunday
- Dec. 24 - Children's Christmas Eve services 1:00 & 3:00pm
- Dec. 28 - No Sunday School - Enjoy Family Worship
- Jan. 4 - Kings Sunday
- Jan. 4 - 9:30am Sunday School: JoyTrek starts a 3-week lesson "Jesus Is Born"
- Jan. 4 - P.R.A.Y. Program begins
- Jan. 11 - 9:30am Sunday School: PEAK starts a 5-week lesson "Bible Teachings"
- Jan. 13 - Children's Ministry Team Meeting

Doggie Kisses & Kitty Snuggles,

Celebrating the Season with Our Children!

Our St. Luke's children have been sharing their stories, their faith and their gifts this joyous holiday season. It started with a fun Family Movie Night with "The Grinch" and then we helped gather food to fill 100 Thanksgiving dinner boxes for DenUM (SLY, Jr. went down with SLY to put the boxes together - see photo on pg. 10), and the Tweens made a huge Gratitude Graffiti banner. Our littlest preschoolers all the way up to our 6th graders helped kick off Advent with the Tree Lighting Service - this year for the first time adding in an impromptu Christmas Pageant! What a joyous event! Thanks to all who helped make that happen. Our Family Advent Devotionals have been a beautiful pause during the week to remember the meaning of the season and the Holiday Shop was a big hit as always! And don't miss out on Candy Cane Sunday and our Children's Christmas Eve services with our puppet ministry! SLY, Jr. held a crazy fun Christmas Party and next up for them is Jumpstreet on Jan. 11 and then our overnight LOCK-IN on Jan. 30 at the church! Friends are always welcome. Look at our webpages for the latest updates. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to ALL!



Sharon Oliver
Director of
Children's Ministry



Samantha Leahy
Director of Early
Childhood Ministry



Stephanie Kirk
Children's Ministry
Coordinator

St. Luke's Kids
Growing with God



Find Your Way to Family Camp

Where can you go on a waterfall hike, paddle a canoe, fly through the trees on a zipline, roast marshmallows over a campfire, and maybe even see a moose? Family Camp, of course! Every day is a new adventure with fun activities, delicious food, and lots of fellowship.

Find your way to Family Camp and spend a few nights, or stay for a whole week of fun. Family Camp will be held from July 17-26, 2015 at Snow Mountain Ranch in Granby, Colorado. We hope your family will become a part of our Family Camp family this summer.

Online sign ups begin on January 11, 2015; look for the link SOON on the St. Luke's page at www.stlukeshr.com. Questions? Contact Amy Antinoro at slumcfamilycamp@gmail.com.

The P.R.A.Y. Program is coming to St. Luke's in JANUARY 2015!

Join us for **God & Me** for 1st-3rd grade and **God & Family** for 4th & 5th grade (5 Sundays beginning Jan. 4). 11:00am-noon. Open to all children in Grades 1-5. Sign up now - space is limited. We need adult helpers. For info or to sign up contact sharon@stlukeshr.com. Emblems will be presented on SCOUT SUNDAY February 8.



Kay Swanson
Director of
Little School



Little School News: Blessings to All Families this Special Time of Year!

Little School is buzzing with excitement, celebrating the birthday of baby Jesus and giving other people help in a time of need! We had an exciting food drive for St. Luke's Thanksgiving boxes and Ms. Amy's Shining Stars and Ms. Jennifer's Birdies were top givers with 61

cans of green beans! So fun to share with others! December brings us to our busy learning schedule, talking about St. Nick in Chapel, and the custom of putting out our shoes for surprises. We also get to wear our pajamas, have pancake breakfast and Santa visits!

With all of the holiday rush, we try to spend time focusing on families and the birth of our Lord! We know that the best gift of Christmas is a babe in a manger! **EVERY CHILD DESERVES A STABLE BEGINNING!**

January means **REGISTRATION!** Forms and tours begin the week of January 11, 2015. It's time to think about your child starting preschool in September of 2015! We offer classes for children who are 2½ by Oct. 1 (2 by April 1) and potty trained (no pull-ups), as well as children 3 and 4. Children who do not attend kindergarten because of late birthdays (May to Oct.) are encouraged to attend our fabulous Explorer's program. **PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE** StLukeslittleschool.org for all of our details and information on classes, times and tuition fees. TOURS are available on Wed. and Thurs. mornings at 10:00am (starting the week of Jan. 11) no appointment is necessary and your children are welcome to come with you. We would love to have you join the NUMBER ONE preschool in Douglas County!

*Christmas Joy and New Year's Blessings
from Ms. Kay and all the Staff at Little School!*

Interest Meeting: Support Group for Family Members and Friends of Incarcerated Loved Ones

Thurs., Jan. 22, 5:00-6:30pm Rm 212

If you or someone you know has a loved one who is presently incarcerated or has been recently released from prison, and you would like to meet with others in the same situation, St. Luke's is offering an opportunity for this to happen. Sharing experiences, information, and support from others may help you feel less alone and make the difficulties more manageable. This support group is open to everyone in the community and not limited to only St. Luke's members. Questions? Contact Rev. Sallie or Rev. Ryan.



"The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church."



Candlelight Dinner! Thank you for supporting our two missions this year! The table was piled high with new socks, hats and gloves for Mondays in the Park team to share with the homeless. Thanks to Sam Leahy for sharing about this vital mission team. We also want to thank Jenita Rhodes for speaking on one of St. Luke's newest ministries, First Steps. As always, thanks to FET for a delicious and elegant meal and the Men of St. Luke's for stepping forward to serve as our waiters. What a delightful and hilarious end to the evening with our entertainment provided by the St. Luke's "On Our Knees" puppet team. This lovely evening is a team effort by so many people at St. Luke's and we cannot thank you enough for all of your support.



This year the Mission Recognition Pin was awarded to Sandi Miyaki. Sandi has been serving the church quietly for years, especially in the areas of building maintenance, safety, and hospitality. She is at the church on a moment's notice any time a need arises and she is always helping FET and the funeral team with events. She is unassuming, meticulous, committed, professional, thoughtful, caring, and HELPFUL. Thank you for your service and dedication to our church, Sandi!



Board Positions Open - The United Methodist women will have openings on the Board for 2015. Some women are rolling off the team and others are switching positions so there are opportunities to get involved! Please contact our current President Janet Sackett (jsackett@comcast.net or 303-794-4303) to discuss where your gifts might be used on this fun team.

Subgroups of United Methodist Women at St. Luke's:

Women are welcome to attend a subgroup of UMW anytime during the year!

Women's Night Out - First Monday, 6:30pm - Contact Elaine Carlstrom ecarlstrom@comcast.net or Jean Dunn jd-teacher@hotmail.com

- January 5 - Luigi's (8130 S. University Blvd. Centennial)
- February 2 - Sunflower Asian Cafe (91 W. Mineral Ave. Centennial)

Itch to Stitch - Second Saturday 10:00-11:30am. Meet in church basement. All skill levels welcome! Contact Fran West 303-797-7107 mfranwest@gmail.com

- Still collecting flannel for UMCOR diapers and nightgowns. Place in UMCOR bin in mission closet.

Common Thread - meets First Thursday at 10:00am, usually at the church. This is not a sewing group, but a faithful friends fellowship group Call Caroline Butler for more info 303-797-3225

Simply Saturday Helping Hands - Meets random Saturdays throughout the year. Contact Linda Osborn (lmosborn5@gmail.com) or Janet Sackett (jsackett@comcast.net)

- March 7- serve at Cafe 180

Women's Monday Night Bible Study - Second Monday, 6:30pm Rm 213.

- Studying *Sisters: Bible Study for Women - Unfailing Love, Growing Closer to Jesus* Contact Janet Sackett (jsackett@comcast.net) for more info

Book Group - Fourth Monday, Room 206, 7:00pm (6:15pm potluck) RenaeParra@aol.com for info.

- December 22 - NO Book; Christmas movie night 6:30pm - bring an appetizer or snack to share
- January 26 - "Plainsong" by Kent Haruf

Save the Date: Saturday, March 14 -

District Spiritual Day Apart in Castle Rock (8:30am-2:30pm)





A 55+ MINISTRY

Seasoned Voyagers Update

- **January 21, Wednesday**, the church bus will take us to the Colorado History Museum.
- **February 19, Thursday**, in the Fellowship Hall for a program of special interest, "Organizing Legal Affairs. Three documents every Coloradan should have to protect their health and welfare."
- **Spring TBA** A trip by church bus to Red Rocks and Dinosaur Ridge and their museums.



Seasoned Voyagers View the Past

The Nov. 18 gathering in Fellowship Hall focused on the topic of the Sand Creek Massacre in which a 700-man volunteer regiment under the command of Col. John Chivington, an ordained Methodist minister attacked an Indian encampment near Fort Lyons killing 170 Cheyenne and Arapaho in November 1864.

Col. Chivington wrote his superiors of a surprise morning attack on a village with 900 to 1000 warriors, which ended in a great victory killing 400 to 500 Indians and almost annihilating the entire tribe. Capt. Silas Soule saw a betrayal of peaceful Indians and refused to fire a shot or order his men into action. He wrote in chilling detail about the deaths of women and children. Our own professor Steve Collins led us through documents of the resulting investigation to help us make our decisions about the reports. The details of the trophy taking among the 160 or more who were killed were hard to read aloud. Rev. Janet Forbes spoke of her learning curve about the Massacre. She was assigned to be the speaker at a meeting in 1995 with representatives of the Cheyenne and Arapaho nations and the Methodist Church. In spite of being well prepared through research, she was humbled and moved by how small her words seemed in the presence of the survivors of people whose land and family and way of life had been taken away by this event.

Methodists are among those that participated in a healing march from Sand Creek to the Capitol steps from Nov. 29 to Dec. 3. The run commemorated the victims and survivors of the massacre and the healing of those involved. This dark side of the rapid development of the Colorado Territory, that justified displacement and death of "hostile" Native Americans is not history to be proud of 150 years later.

MISSIONS OF THE MONTH

Highlighting Mission Opportunities:

For more about missions supported by St. Luke's, contact
Scott Hetherington 484-883-0778 scott.g.hetherington@gmail.com

Community Meal Truly Serves the Community

A heartfelt thank you for your support of St. Luke's first annual Thanksgiving Community Meal. With your bounteous food donations we served around 30 here at Church were able to serve many more in our community. We delivered to several families from Sedalia who needed a hot meal and were unable to be at the Church. We were also able to deliver a meal Thanksgiving evening for 30 to a Women's Crisis Shelter. Our leftovers the next day were served to those less fortunate in Civic Center Park and to many more families within our neighborhood. Many were fed from your kindhearted generosity. As it turns out over half of our donated Community Meal actually went out into the community. Now, that wasn't our initial plan but faith is always trusting in God's plan.



Christmas In The Park

Please consider donating, hats, gloves, and socks this holiday season to be handed out to those less fortunate on Christmas Day at noon downtown in Lincoln Park. This is a tradition enjoyed by many from St. Luke's as we join our community to support in making the holidays warmer and brighter for others. Thank you for your support. For more information please contact sam@stlukeshr.com.

Project Homeless Connect 2014

WOW! What an amazing event. It was so inspiring to see the number of volunteers that filled the Colorado Convention Center on November 17 with the intention of helping individuals



in our community who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless. This year was a record breaking year in terms of volunteer attendance with 1,079 individuals ready to lend a hand and help a stranger and folks from St. Luke's were among that number! They had 949 clients access resources that they need to help become self-sufficient and get off the streets. We'd like to share with you how this experience changed us...

"Although my client had some special challenges that made communication difficult, I could look deep into his eyes and there... I met Jesus."—Lynda Fickling

"I loved getting to know my client and her immense hope, joy and determination through all of her challenges. She had an attitude of gratitude and positivity to which we should all aspire. We closed the place down together after doing job searches, picking out clothes for her 2 little girls, getting her hair done, getting a pair of glasses, sharing a lunch together, and working through housing and legal issues. She promised soon she would be at this event helping others."—Sharon Oliver

"Jon and I can honestly say the PHC-14 experience was extremely fulfilling. Seeing how those who have so very little are quite unafraid to express their belief in God and gratefulness for what they have (or don't) was impressive to me. One significant moment of joy came when we witnessed our client get fitted for his very own eye glasses. He told us how he could not see the face of another volunteer standing 3 feet away, and he did not believe anyone had the ability to see an eye chart 15-20 feet away. Another fulfilling moment was having our clients' parking tickets adjusted from \$1400 to \$200. Many of us don't understand what it is like to not have the money to pay for street, lot or garage parking. This is not to mention that having a personal garage for parking is another luxury we often accept as a necessity."—Linda Streaty

United Methodist Missionary Donna Pewo Hosted by St. Luke's



On the evening of October 26, we were pleased to host Donna Pewo, United Methodist Missionary serving at the Clinton Indian Community Center in Clinton, Oklahoma. (pictured above in center between Rev. Janet and Caroline Butler.) After a delicious pot luck dinner, Donna told us with passion and tears in her eyes about the joy of ministering with the Cheyenne and Arapaho children and teens in Clinton. On Tuesday nights, she meets with the youth for supper, followed by Bible study and fellowship. On Thursdays Donna holds activities with the grade school children. In addition, there are special events and field trips throughout the year and opportunities to simply "hang out," play educational computer games and do crafts. The Clinton Indian Community Center is a safe, welcoming, fun and peaceful place where the children and youth are nurtured spiritually and physically. They love Donna and she is making a big difference in their lives. We are so blessed to be contributors to Donna's ministry and in relationship with her. I give special thanks to the St. Luke's UMW for all their support.

Guatemala Mission Opportunities

Spaces are available for a June 2015 work trip to hold an "English Camp" in Guatemala. The best students at the John Wesley School will be attending a week of intensive English instruction in Lemoa. Come join the team—no special skills needed except the ability to speak English and a love of children!

We need native English speakers to:

- Teach small groups of 3-4 well behaved kids
- Lead crafts, games, and music using English

Trip dates are 6/20-28. For more info, contact Laura Richards, laura@puravida.org

Sponsor a Student – A member of St. Luke's recently traveled to Guatemala to help select new students to be sponsored through the Pura Vida scholarship program. In Guatemala rural children are only able to complete up to 6th grade at the most, with many dropping out by 3rd grade to work for their families. A sponsorship allows these students to continue on in school and be supported in their education. We have a table in the Fellowship Hall where you can learn more about the sponsorships and select a student to sponsor.

Our Guatemala Annual Burrito Breakfast will be held on Sunday Jan. 4

to coincide with 3 Kings Sunday. All funds raised at this breakfast will help support our construction costs for our upcoming Guatemala Missions trips. Burritos will sell for \$4 for pre-sales and \$5 on the day of the breakfast. Pre-sales will be available in the Fellowship Hall between services during December.

Christmas Tags

The Guatemala Missions team will be offering a variety of alternative Christmas gifts this year. Tags with more information can be found on the Giving Tree in the Fellowship Hall. Options are:

- Support our Christmas program to supply milk to the families in Lemoa, Guatemala. The cost is only \$12.50 for a can of this enriched powered milk, which can last up to 3 months. This makes a wonderful gift to these families, who are not able to afford this luxury for their family.
- Make a donation towards our Water Filter Project. Most rural families do not have access to clean water which causes a multitude of health issues. A \$40 filtration system will provide a family with fresh water for a year. Our SLY team will distribute the filters next summer. Donations in any amount are appreciated.
- Our March Construction Team and our June SLY Team will be building 2 houses for needy families in the Lemoa area. Each home will cost \$5,500 to build. All donations will go directly to the purchase of building supplies. Gifts of any amount are appreciated!



Thanks for Your Financial Support!



Sheri Henry
Director of Finance



Kristi Pawley
Accounting Clerk

The end of 2014 is rapidly approaching. It's time to determine how you want to close out the year to get your best tax advantages. Here are some ideas to consider:

Selling Appreciated Stock:

If you have some appreciated stock that you would like to remove from your portfolio you can donate that stock to St. Luke's and receive donation credit plus reduce or avoid capital gains on the transfer. (Please consult with your tax attorney to confirm the tax treatment of donated stock). To take advantage of this opportunity, contact me to get instructions for doing the stock transfer. It is a simple process but it takes about a week or so to get the transfer completed and it has to be completely finished before Dec. 31.

Prepaying Future Pledges:

If you need additional tax deductions for 2014, consider prepaying your 2015 pledge. The amounts we receive for future year(s) are recorded as prepaids and applied to the year you designate. Please mark your checks accordingly.

If you haven't finished your 2014 giving, please do so before Dec. 31.

All contributions received during 2014 are posted as 2014 contributions unless you instruct us to apply them to a future year. Contributions received in the mail after Dec. 31 will be posted to 2014 only if they are postmarked on or before Dec. 31 and we are not instructed to apply them as a prepayment of your 2015 giving. You can make an online credit card transaction as late as 2:00pm, MT, on Dec. 31 and it will still be applied to your 2014 giving record.

We offer a variety of ways for you to make your contributions.

We invite you to select the method that is best for your particular need from the following methods:

- Cash, check or stock transfers
- Scheduled automatic withdrawals from your checking or credit card accounts.

You may enroll in either of these methods by going online at stlukeshr.com or contacting me directly.

- One-time online transaction. Go online at stlukeshr.com and do a one-time transaction from your checking or credit card accounts. This method is great for situations such as forgetting to leave your check in the offering plate on Sunday or if you're out of town.

Thanks to everyone who has returned your 2015 Commitment Cards. If you have not had an opportunity to return yours yet, you may mail them in or drop them off at the church at any time. We greatly appreciate your support!



Upcoming Events!

SLY (St. Luke's Youth) is an inclusive group for all 7th-12th graders that focuses on fellowship, fun, and finding out what this God thing is all about! As always, we have lots going on and are so excited to grow closer while having fun and being the hands and feet of Christ!



- ✦ **January 4 - Confirmation Starts**
- ✦ **January 23-25 - Youth Leadership Conference**
- ✦ **February 17 - Fat Tuesday Fundraiser**

Sign up to receive our emails and Check www.stlukeshr.com and click on "Youth" or "SLY" for up-to-date info on programs, activities, opportunities and more!

Sundays:

- **9:30-10:30am – SLY AM**
Life as a Youth
- **6:00-7:30pm – SLY PM**
All sorts of fellowship and fun activities are happening Sunday nights in the youth room! Check out our website for details.

Wednesdays:

- **Homework/Tutoring Hour 5:30-6:30pm** – A chance to get your homework done and even get help if you need it!
- **Wed. SLY 6:30-8:00pm** – Youth directed fellowship activities including dinners out, game nights, and fun art projects!

ON THE SLY: Ready for the Holiday Season!

Our bellies are still full after a wonderful thanksgiving holiday. As we anticipated the turkey and stuffing that would fill our tables, it was hard to forget those who would have empty plates this year. For the third year in a row, the youth rallied together to help out families who could not afford a thanksgiving meal. The youth room was



Dave Laurvick
Director of
Youth Ministry



Amy McMullen
Assistant Dir. of
Youth Ministry



filled with boxes of stuffing, cans of sweet potatoes, jello, green beans and corn. We were able to gather enough food to help over 100 families! Then we went down along with a group of our SLY, Jr. families to help put over 500 boxes together with Denver Urban Ministries (DenUM).

We have all sorts of exciting events coming up this December and January. On Dec. 17 we are going to visit the Hudson Gardens to see their Christmas light show and then on Dec. 21 we will be having our annual SLY White Elephant Gift Exchange! Then we are going to kick off the New Year with a trip to Jumpstreet, Karaoke with St. Andrew, and a dance party at Littleton UMC.

Also starting in January is our Confirmation Classes. We have over 20 eighth graders eager and ready to learn about and delve into the history and philosophy of the United Methodist Church. Our Confirmation leaders are so excited to meet with and get to know some awesome youth!

We are blessed to be able to work with the youth of St. Luke's and love to watch God work in their lives!

—Yours in Christ, Dave & Amy

Mark Your Calendars Mission Trips Summer 2015

- Guatemala Team May 30-June 7
- Sr. High to Rockford IL
June 13-21 (*pending final logistics of transportation*)
- Jr. High to Crownpoint NM
July 12-18 (*pending final logistics of Transportation*)

Registration forms available soon!
Informational meetings in Youth Room:
Sr. High (current 9-12) Feb. 8 @ 11:00am
Jr. High (current 6-8) Jan. 11 @ 11:00am

Offer Assistance to Those Who Ask

On Sunday mornings, persons frequently come to the church seeking assistance: gasoline, food, lodging, bus fare. It is usually not timely for the pastors to speak with these persons until 12:00 noon, following the morning services of worship. Please invite those who make such requests to attend worship and fellowship. Be hospitable. If a pastor (or staff person) is not available, you may respond to the need on behalf of the congregation. During the season of Advent and Lent every year, we receive a special offering to assist persons in these ways. **Our Benevolence Funds are sources of support for you so that you may respond to the request for help.** You may take persons to the grocery store and purchase a gift certificate for groceries. You can take the family to the gas station and fill their tank. You may offer to buy a meal. You may direct persons to Love INC or Interfaith Community Services. You may assist with bus fare. You may pay a cab fare in advance, if necessary. The Benevolence Fund can reimburse you for any expenses you may incur while offering assistance. Please do not feel that you need to use your own resources. The congregation has planned well for the giving of this kind of assistance. However, we recommend that you do not give cash, unless there are no other alternatives for assistance. Thank you for your care of persons in need.

The Common Table

Sunday, January 25, from 11:00am-noon

Please bring a dish to share. We'll break bread together, and share the journey of our community.

Managers and supervisors in the business world are often trained to hold "fearless conversations" with their employees and co-workers. These conversations typically revolve around a subject that may be unpleasant—such as a performance problem for an employee—or one that may be uncomfortable for a co-worker—such as a failure to follow established office protocol or policy. The training focuses on strategies such as active listening, positive body language, and the use of supportive and reinforcing language.

Guess what? Members of a church need to have similar "fearless conversations" with each other from time to time. We don't always agree on a given subject or see eye-to-eye on matters important to the church.

But, how do we have those conversations in such a way that we honor and respect the opinions of everyone at the table? How do we convey to someone with whom we may disagree that we still value him or her as a person? St. Luke's tradition of diversity of theology provides a wonderful foundation from which a rich diversity of thought and opinion can flourish and be shared with the larger community—in a way that is appropriate and supportive.

Our Common Table meetings for 2015 will be organized as a series of meetings built around the "fearless conversations" that we need to have with each other as we decide what role St. Luke's will play in some of the most important social issues facing our society. The issues of death with dignity & marriage equality are two that readily come to mind—there are many others.

Before we have these "fearless conversations" with one another, however, we need to learn first how to have them in such a way that everyone feels safe to share their viewpoints, to listen to and respect what others on the opposing side of the issue think and feel, and most importantly, to continue to value the relationships that we have at St. Luke's. Rev. Janet has said it many times... there is no single issue at St. Luke's that is more important than the relationships with one another that we nurture and sustain.

We will kick off our 2015 Common Table series on January 25 with facilitators who will teach us the important communication skills that we need to master in order to have our "fearless conversations" in the most productive way we can. Who knows? With 2016 being a presidential election year, maybe we will find that there are secular applications to what we will learn as well!

Please plan to join us on January 25—and at future Common Tables—as we face our future together first by learning how to communicate with one another.

Child care is available with 48 hours' notice. Please contact Sam Leahy at sam@stlukeshr.com.

And if you have a question, or would like to suggest a topic, please contact Brad Ash at cbash0628@gmail.com.



James Ramsey
Director of Music
& Arts Ministries



Kenrick Mervine
Associate Dir. of
Music Ministry/
Organist



Jennifer Ferguson
Associate Director
of Music Ministry



Kay Coryell
Dir. of Handbells
& Children's Music
Ministry

Christmas Eve Services

Start planning ahead for Christmas Eve. We offer a variety of experiences for our Christmas services, from lively to mellow.

1:00 and 3:00pm services - Family and Children's Service. Music includes Kids Prayz, Youth Bells, Soul Purpose Youth Choir, and Puppet Ministry. Suitable for all and delightful for young children.

5:00 and 7:00pm services - Traditional Service. Music includes the Chancel Choir, the Brass Ensemble, the organ, and many traditional hymns. A peaceful and inspiring time to welcome the holy Christ.

9:00pm service - Contemplative Service. Music includes solos and organ. This service is a more reflective service and includes communion.

"Les Miserables" Mark Your Calendar

When the St. Luke's Wesley Players were formed nearly 15 years ago at St. Luke's, a sprawling production of "Les Miserables" would have sounded impossible. But that is exactly what our own theater group will bring to our stage. **March 13-15, 2015.**

Everyone is invited to enjoy this much-loved musical while also helping add to the over \$250,000 the troupe has raised over the years for various charities and missions. Rev. Janet will use the text and themes of the musical in her Lenten sermons, and dozens of church members and friends will act, sing, build sets, play in the orchestra, gather props and generally create the magic that is a Wesley Players production.

You won't want to miss this exciting event.



**Come see the St. Luke's Puppet Ministry perform
"Silas Angel and the Christmas Curmudgeon:
A Sheepish Look at Christmas"
Sat. Dec. 20 - 6:30pm in the Sanctuary**

Silas Angel doesn't like Christmas, but is he the curmudgeon everyone thinks he is? Three sheep from the manger 2000 years ago in Bethlehem think not. And they make it their job to make sure that Silas discovers again the true meaning of Christmas and reunites with the daughter he's not seen in fourteen years. Can Silas survive three sheep, who disperse their wisdom through various musical genres, all in his living room on Christmas Eve? Does he have a choice? Come see this heartwarming and humorous look at the true meaning of Christmas with the whole family!



Mike Stevenson & Gail Abernathy on the birth of their granddaughter, Natalie Joy Matthews

More *from Les* by Rev. Les Ludlam: **Winter Miracle**



Willy shrugged his shoulders and pulled his jacket tighter against the cold. "Should've worn the heavy one tonight," he thought as he continued his rounds. He inserted his identity key in the slot of the guard checkpoint to verify his presence and then paused to look up. The sky was clear, the stars seemed to have multiplied several times over and become even brighter with the cold weather. Willy marveled at the sight! "Ya done good, God," he said quietly, "Merry Christmas."

As Willy approached the next checkpoint, he thought he heard something. He stopped and waited quietly, listening carefully. He heard something again! He moved stealthily toward the sound. There was something or somebody just outside the gate. "Someone is singing!" he thought, "And there's another sound, like whimpering!"

Security rules require that when making their rounds, guards are not to leave the property without authorization, so he pulled out his radio and called the security shack. "Williams here," he said quietly, "I'm at checkpoint seven. There's some sort of disturbance outside the gate; request that I go investigate." "Permission granted," was the reply, "we'll call you back in 5 minutes to check on your status."

Willy quietly unlocked and opened the gate and crept toward the singing coming from the shrubs at the edge of the cleared area. He stopped and smiled. "Well young lady, what are you doing out here?"

The young girl seemed quite out of place, her bright coat was covered with various images; her dark hair hung to her shoulders and seemed to have a sort of glow to it. She was sitting at the base of a bush, holding a very pregnant-looking female retriever in her lap and stroking the dog's head as she sang. "Holly's about to deliver her first litter and needs some comforting and warmth," she said, "Can you help?"

After a few minutes and negotiation with the Security captain, Holly was resting in a cardboard box lined with clean rags near the Security shack heater. The puppies were about to arrive. Willy put down a pan of water; Holly wagged her tail and began to lap, then looked up at him in a way that spoke volumes.

"Where'd she go?" asked the captain as he looked around the shack. "That girl who came in with you, she seems to have disappeared." "I'll make the rounds again and look for her," replied Willy, but he was certain she wouldn't be found. "There was something special about that girl," he thought, "Wouldn't be surprised if she just flew away after Holly was taken care of. She sure did sing beautifully!"

It was late June. Holly and Willy were making their usual rounds around the property boundary. Holly had become the security mascot in the months following the weaning of her puppies. The guards had soon learned that she was good to have around. She had detected an intruder quickly, even before the security system sounded off.



The midday sun was hot as Willy and Holly started out. Then, as they passed checkpoint 4, Holly suddenly stopped. The hair on her neck bristled. She began to growl softly and dropped down. "What's the matter, Holly?" exclaimed Willy.

Then he saw the rattlesnake, coiled and waiting to strike if he came any closer. Holly sprang into action. She darted toward the snake and then dodged quickly to the side. The snake struck toward where she had been an instant before. Holly grabbed it behind the head and began to shake it violently. The snake coiled up and tried to pry itself out of her mouth but to no avail. Within a few moments it went limp and Holly tossed the dead rattler to the side of the path.

Willy watched this scene in amazement. He had never seen a dog kill a snake like that before! "If Holly hadn't been here, I'd have surely been bitten," he thought. "Thanks girl," and he rubbed her head, "You're my guardian angel!"

Holly and Willy remained a team for several years. As she grew older she had difficulty walking the rounds. She began to get worse and Willy took her to the veterinarian and the news was bad, she had a fatal disease and wouldn't live much longer. "Just keep her comfortable" was the advice from the vet.

It was winter again and bitter cold. Christmas was approaching. This evening, Holly stayed in her bed at the Guard shack; she was getting weaker and weaker. Willy hurried to complete his rounds so he could get back to see about Holly. As he entered the shack, he was startled. There was that same young girl he had encountered years before just outside the security gate. She was singing softly and Holly was lying quite still. "She's about gone," said the girl, "I'm here to take care of her." The girl took Holly in her arms, walked toward the entrance gate and disappeared into the darkness.

Willy stood there amazed! He didn't try to follow the girl. He smiled; "Never did get her name." He thought, "But I didn't need to."

God bless us all, Les