



St. Luke's **MESSENGER**

January/February 2016

PASTOR'S CORNER

"Are you the one?" Luke 7:19

As John the Baptist sits in prison for preaching and teaching against Herod and the rulers and authorities of his day, he begins to doubt the mission of Jesus. Because of this, John sends a group of his followers to Jesus asking, "Are you the one?" John's suffering and imprisonment dragging on, coupled with the actions and teachings of Jesus so far, are leaving him with questions over whether Jesus is really the one they had been waiting for to bring liberation to God's world.

I know that as I continue my own journey through the Gospels, over and over, I sometimes find myself asking this same question. "Jesus, are you really the one?" His teachings and life just seem so impractical and irresponsible from our world's standards that I find myself sometimes questioning his words and commands and whether they can really be from God.

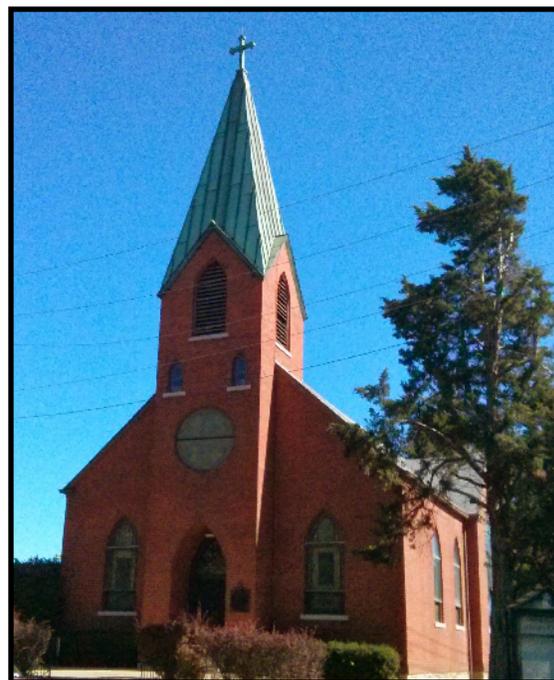
Do I really have to love all my enemies? Do I really have to turn the other cheek? Do I really have to give to all who ask? Do I really have refuse to hold any debt or grudge over anyone's head? Do I really have to stop all worry and anxiety about tomorrow and the future of my loved ones? Do I really have to stop storing up anything for the future? Do I really have to let go of all ownership and possessions to follow Jesus? Do I really have to deny my self-will? Do I really have to carry my own

cross and follow Jesus in dying for the cause of God's Kingdom? Jesus, are you really the one we have to listen to, all the time? Can't we ignore you at least some of the time?

I think it is essential to our walk of discipleship that we are honest with ourselves when we are being questioning and dismissive of Jesus. We learn from John the Baptist that it is expected that we will go through times of really questioning Jesus for who he is. The key though is that we do not blind ourselves to our questioning and lie to ourselves about being followers of Jesus when we are in fact turning a deaf ear to Jesus's words for us today.

We need to face the reality of our doubt and questions head on, but then run back to Jesus's own response to John: look around you at all that is happening in connection me! Jesus's answer to John is to pay attention to the people and lives being transformed in his wake. So for us, when we are doubting and questioning if Jesus is really the one, we need to pay attention to the lives and people that are transformed when they truly embrace the teachings and life of Jesus. Look at the Mother Teresas of the world and see the beauty of the new world and the new kind of person that Jesus creates. Let's see that beauty in stark contrast to the ugliness of our greedy and violent world and follow once again.

Pastor Luke



Worship and Bible Study Schedule

Sunday

9:30 am Worship Gathering
10:45 am Text of the Week &
| Jesus Time

Monday

12:30 pm Pastor Mike Bible Study
6:00 pm Pastor Luke Bible Study

Wednesday

4:00 pm Jesus Time
6:15 pm Choir



Community Ministry Corner

In the last decade of my life I've been exposed to Bowen family systems theory. I'd listened to presentations prior, but didn't have the depth or awareness to sense this message was for me. The sessions I attended in San Antonio monthly, I now continue to attend in Arkansas every other month as I've become a KC kid. I wish the truths of these developments of Murray Bowen, about systems thinking as opposed to simple, stunted, and lazy linear thinking, were more widely promoted and brought into our common knowledge and understanding.

Bowen Theory provides the positive encouragement that the best emotional maturity you will see in a grown adult is 70%. The surface mistakes of our own, that we easily identify in our sin-filled judging eyes, we like to identify as flaws in another brother or sister. We're quick to detect any infection in another and declare disease and remedy for this person. Bowen again provides the encouraging words to my soul, that the mistakes and flaws we see in another are a package deal, created by the flaws not only in the one identified, but in any involved in the "guilty" person's life, especially family.

Notice we like to comfort ourselves with phrasing of "family" when we talk about happy, comfortable, enjoyable, and productive institutions--such as your place of work, your place of worship (St Luke's), my other circle of employment (Calvary Lutheran School)--we quickly speak this truth of why our institution works so well..."we're like a family." I don't know about you but there's a lot of beauty AND a lot of pain in my family.

When life is steady, we have an easier time facing interactions and behaving civilized. Yet, Bowen states that likely we will only get 70% right in our emotional thinking, speaking, and acting when the energy/tensions rise. You know how well we handle getting C's in school or life today. You know how much more "involved" parents get when their child falls off A or A/B honor roll...! It is comforting to me (yes) to know that the best of the best in your and my circles has a C- game in real life moments. It makes me more willing to look into the

mirror and see the truths of my heart, mind, and soul, and then start to peel back my avoidance tendencies and how I rationalize away less than A+ for God's people. I don't need to be embarrassed, defensive, or accusatory. You and I need to be real, realistic, humbled, and really taken to our knees, whether or not our other C- Christian "colleagues" want to do the hard work of refinement that Christ openly speaks into our heart, minds, and souls.

Another Bowen truth that is comforting to me is that the symptoms of sin in another (mother, father, sister, brother) is the result of the NETWORK/circle, AND the multi-generational projection of your "family"--blood, work, friend circle, or "Christ"-ian family. It makes me feel better knowing the mess in me, and those I love or tolerate, are the results of the immaturity and selfish choices in those surrounding them and from the decisions and patterns of prior generations. The sin is each person's own, and yet not only theirs ALONE, but their network of blood family and circle of influence, including grandparents, uncles, and aunts throughout the generations. I get to see the sin in another person and own up to the fact that I have a part in that community's health and sin, and any circle of involvement I consume myself with--all while believing they are the ones that God is placing me in community with to make an impact on and be impacted upon, through the really tough progression of giving patient, salvaging love and also hard truths to one another.

The hard work of Bowen systems thinking and living, speaks of the Christian walk to me: suck it up and start the deep, hard work of sanctifying our souls in each moment and relationship. It takes intentional preparation, restraint during the fun moments, and reflection. It takes time, intentional periods of space and silent thought, and assessment and conviction in self--noting our preferred patterns and the damage they really do. And finally, the need to develop and refine ourselves through the really hard gut, heart, and mind work--refinement which is pain-filled, but so healing, for self and the circles we want to healthily grow into God's truth and love with.

--Kevin Dierks

Baptism Anniversary

- Richard Vogel (1/1)
- Travis Renne (1/1)
- Bernardo May (1/2)
- David Sasnett (1/24)
- Jack Wagner (2/8)
- Robert May (2/23)



- Christina Bridge (1/3)
- Marsha Oyer (1/7)
- Julie Phillips-Kammrath (1/14)
- Kathy Tharp (1/19)
- Stephen May (1/25)
- Robert May (1/31)
- Jennifer Wagner (2/3)
- Jeanne Gardner (2/6)
- Dorothy Melott (2/10)
- Johanna Bridge (2/14)

Wedding Anniversary

- Michael & Judy May (1/3/1971, 45 yrs)
- David & Marie Sasnett (1/27/2007, 9 yrs)



Board of Directors' Corner

As we are in the beginnings of our new church year we have a new and rough estimate for the annual church budget that is about \$147,000 and looks to be nice and sustainable. We give thanks to God for his care of his ministry in this place and humbly ask him to continue to use us as his faithful servants and witnesses to these streets and neighborhoods in KCK. We have been blessed in so many ways through the generosity of our own people as well as through gifts from additional friends of this community. It cannot be stated enough that we are so grateful for every gift that is given to this community, for these gifts allow us to continue this ministry of teaching Jesus and living his Way among our family in Christ and among so many in this neighborhood. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

As part of our continued attempt to use God's buildings and resources in this place for his purposes, we have prayerfully partnered with two other budding congregations that will be regularly using the sanctuary space. The first, St. Luke's Anglican Church, is a Spanish-speaking church plant led by Pastor Gene Flannery. The second, The Remnant, is a Presbyterian church plant led by Pastor Drew Smith. Please keep these fellow brothers and sisters in your prayers as we all work to bring the Gospel of Jesus's Kingdom to this city. We look forward to a year of exciting growth and challenges in ways that only Jesus could lead!

Property Corner

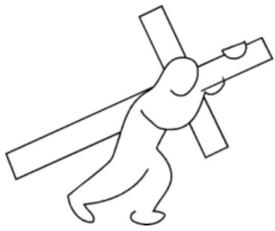
Please join us at the parsonage on February 20, Saturday from 9:00 am till we finish the job (we will provide some lunch if it takes us that long). This will be the first phase of the parsonage clean-up as we transition tenants in 2016.

This job will first consist of cleaning all of the junk and clutter from the house. We will use the dining and living rooms to separate and salvage any items that are worth saving and find them a new home with members or at a thrift store. The rest will be thrown in a dumpster. Once we get the upper rooms cleaned out, we will have a group of people come in behind and do the soap cleaning.

Please contact John Wagner if you have any questions or ideas. Thank you!

Sermon Series: "The Gospel of Luke" Through April 10, 2016

Join us as we continue to let our new year and lives be shaped by walking with Jesus as he brings the Kingdom of God into our world. If you want a companion resource for our journey through Luke's Gospel, check out Pastor Luke's book, *"Father Into Your Hands": The Way of Jesus According to the Gospel of Luke-Acts*, which is available on Amazon.com or personally through him.



Come check out our website and find access to great resources like the church calendar, sermons, online-giving, a full-color newsletter, and more!

www.stlukeskck.org



Lent Series -- "Encountering Jesus"

Soup Supper: 5:30 pm -- Worship: 7:00 pm

"A Blade Will Pass Through" - Feb 17 @ St. Luke's

"Is This Not the Child of Joseph?" - Feb 24 @ Immanuel

"Depart From Me, I Am a Sinful Man" - Mar 2 @ Bethel

"I Am Not Worthy" - Mar 9 @ Grace

"Are You the One?" - Mar 16 @ Faith

Upcoming Dates and Times

Confirmation Class - TBD, stay tuned for more info

LWML Breakfast Meeting - Sat, Jan 16, 9:30 am

LWML Mission Breakfast - Sat, Jan 31, 10:45 am

St. Luke's Board Meeting - Tues, Feb 2, 5:30 pm

Ash Wednesday - Wed, Feb 10, 7:00 pm

Parsonage Clean-up - Sat, Feb 20, 9:00 am

**Kansas City Medicine Cabinet
Nov/Dec Emergency Assistance**

- Prescription Drugs: 41 individuals
- Medical Supplies: 9 individuals
- Dental Care: 15 individuals
- Vision Care: 55 individuals

**Metro Lutheran Ministry
Nov/Dec Emergency Assistance**

- IDs: 49 individuals
- Food: 581 individuals
- Utilities: 9 families
- Housing: 7 families

St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church
722 Reynolds Ave
Kansas City, KS, 66101

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