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First Quarter 2009

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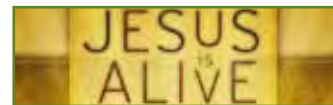
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St. Luke's United Methodist Church

Address P.O. Box 1012 | Bryan, TX 77806

Phone 979.691.5400 | Fax 979.691.5477

Website www.stlukesbcs.org

UPCOMING events

Easter Eggstravaganza

Villa West Park
April 5 @ 12:30 pm

Family Promise Hosting

FUMC Bryan
April 13 & 14

Freedom Begins Here

Tauber Fellowship Center
April 19 @ 8 pm
Continues Sunday nights
through May 10

Boy Scout Food Drive

Brazos Church Pantry
304 West 26th Street in
Downtown Bryan
May 2, 9:30 am-3 pm

Financial Peace University

Tauber Fellowship Center
Continues Wednesday
nights through May 27

Annual Conference

The Woodlands UMC
May 24-27

Faithfulness that Stirs Others to Action

A church in Dayton, Texas, is inspired to follow St. Luke's example by entering a season of intentional prayer and discernment

In the ninth chapter of 2 Corinthians, Paul tells the church in Corinth that their witness has brought encouragement and transformation in Macedonia. The Macedonians were so uplifted by the faithfulness of the Corinthians, they were embarking on a journey to see it for themselves, in person.

Today, I received a call from Rev. Jon Stouffer at First United Methodist Church in Dayton, Texas. He shared that as they were in the midst of a traditional, bureaucratic church building visioning process, they reached a stalemate. Led by the Spirit, he informed the group that they were going to enter as a congregation into a time of prayer and discernment.

Not knowing a model to turn to, through mutual clergy contacts he heard of the faithful endeavor of discernment that St. Luke's engaged in from Fall 2007 to Winter 2008.

I shared our journey of discernment, our intentional corporate commitment to prayer, and our humble willingness to set aside our own agendas for God's purposes.

In the weeks to come, FUMC Dayton will enter into God's unknown, anxiously awaiting His vision for the church.

Please join me as we pray for Jon as their pastor and for each member who will engage in this corporate spiritual discipline. I offer thanksgiving and praise to God that—just like the Corinthians were an example to the Macedonians—St. Luke's has served as a witness to FUMC Dayton, our sister church on her knees.



✠ Rev. Jason Burnham
Pastor

College Ministry Bears Fruit

You've probably already noticed the increase in college students worshipping at St. Luke's over the past year. What you may not know is the story behind this growth and how God's leadership has worked to multiply the group.

We interviewed **Andrew Hook**, who with his wife, Jackie, leads the College Bible Study, and **Ginny Griggs**, a sophomore psychology major from Tyler, Texas.

GINNY, HOW DID THE COLLEGE STUDY BEGIN?

Ginny: In Spring 2008, a few of the college students began to discuss and pray about the possibility of starting a college group and decided to ask Jason about the idea in the fall. Unknown to us, he had been doing the same thing and came to us before we could go to him! We all went to lunch after church at the beginning of the fall semester and determined what kind of study we wanted to have and who we wanted to lead.

SO ANDREW, HOW DID YOU AND JACKIE BECOME THE LEADERS?

Andrew: Jason approached me last year about leading. He said he was looking for a young couple to take the reins and run with it. After discussing it with Jackie and praying about it for a couple of weeks, Jackie and I agreed to take this project on.

HOW DID THE STUDENTS BECOME INVOLVED?

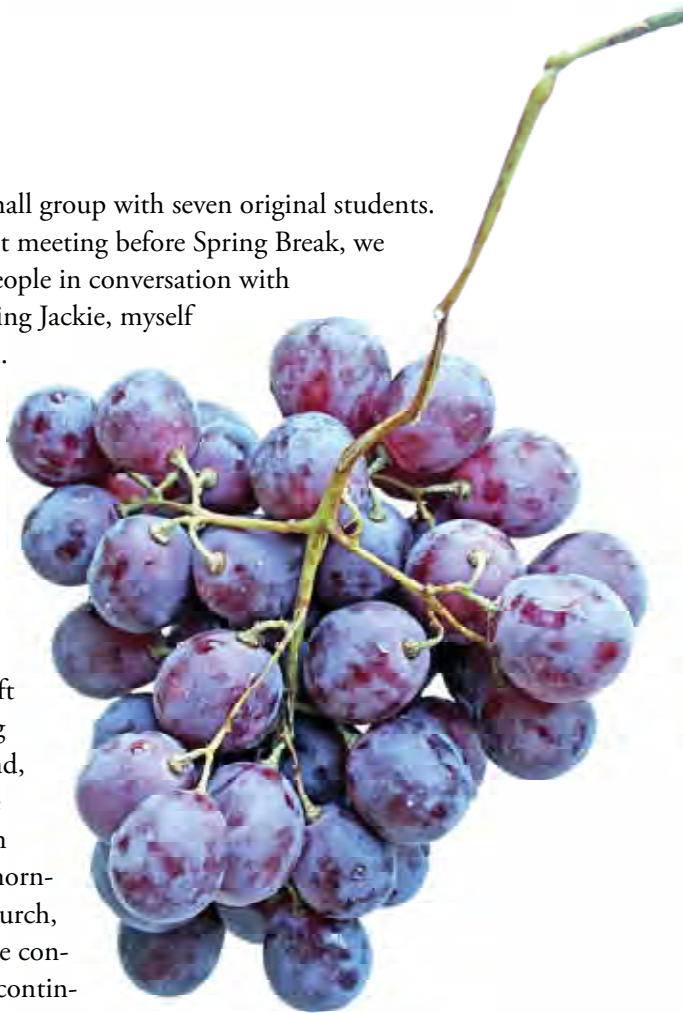
Andrew: They have all come by invitation of someone within the group. We start-

ed this small group with seven original students. At our last meeting before Spring Break, we had 18 people in conversation with us, counting Jackie, myself and Jason. And we were missing several regular members who had already left for Spring Break! And, as anyone can see on Sunday mornings at church, the college contingency continues to grow.

WHAT HAVE THE COLLEGE STUDENTS BEEN STUDYING?

Ginny: We have studied the books of James, Nehemiah and Esther. The Book of James was determined as a good starting point by Andrew and Jason; after that, the group as a whole expressed an interest in Old Testament characters, which led us to study one of each gender. At this point, we're going off Jason's sermon series on real-world issues as fuel for our

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“Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

-Acts 2:46-47



Progress on Phase One

Get your hard hats ready! Trees have been felled, building pad laid and foundation excavated in preparation for construction. All the while, the Building Committee has been hard at work finalizing negotiations with our contractor and signing the church's mortgage.

On March 17, the Building Committee reviewed bids for the full construction of our Phase One facilities. We are pleased to announce that we have awarded the bid to Oakwood Construction Company (OCC). Although we were in negotiations with OCC for a number of weeks, the Building Committee was impressed with the final product they were able to offer our church. To meet the budgetary constraints for the building project,

some sacrifices were made, most notably accepting an architectural shingle roof as an alternative to the originally specified metal roof. Many in the congregation will also remember that a



View of construction site from W. Villa Maria

number of months ago our architect revised the original two-floor option to a single story to accommodate our

budget of \$1.36 million. All contractual information has been reviewed and accepted by Texas Methodist Foundation (our mortgage broker), and we are excited to say we closed on our contract on March 28. Construction will proceed on site in 10 days. Within the next few weeks, the Building Committee will announce a projected timeline, including the anticipated completion of St. Luke's new facility. Continue to be in prayer throughout this process as we depend on the direction of the Master Builder.

✠ Rev. Jason Burnham
Pastor

Missions & Outreach



St. Luke's rejoices that the **Adopt-A-Family Food Drive** was a success! Our congregation collected enough food items to feed a family of four each week for the past three weeks—a total of 216 pounds!



St. Luke's will be hosting **Family Promise**

April 13 and 14 at First UMC in Bryan. Our responsibilities include providing dinner, evening activities and overnight hosting. Volunteer spots are filling up fast. If you have a specific calling to be involved, please contact Linda Wickman at 979-694-3820.

Volunteers of all ages are needed to help with the **Boy Scout Food Drive** on May 2 from 9:30 am–3 pm. The Boy Scouts will deliver nearly 30,000 pounds of food, which needs to be received (this takes strong backs) and sorted (this takes a willing spirit). Meet at the Brazos Church Pantry, 304 W. 26th Street in Downtown Bryan.

JESUS IS ALIVE

Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday

April 5 @ 10:30 am

Good Friday

April 10 @ 6 pm

Easter Sunday

April 12 @ 10:30 am

All services will be held at Mary Branch Elementary. There will **not** be a Maundy Thursday or Easter Sunrise service held this year.



Real Questions

April 19–May 31

We all have real questions about life's issues. Pastor Jason invites you to ask, "What does Scripture have to say about...?"

Your questions will be openly and honestly addressed during this upcoming sermon series. Simply fill out a response card in worship or take the online poll at:

www.stlukesbcs.org

Prayer: The First Priority in Evangelism

We are entering into a season of congregational preparedness so that St. Luke's might properly respond to God's call to evangelism and many might be ushered into the Kingdom of God.

The Word of God repeatedly tells us that God wants all people to be saved and none to be lost. When we, as a congregation, pray for the lost, God gladly hears our prayer and we find assurance that God is drawing and wooing unto Himself those people for whom we are praying by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God orchestrates all kinds of movements and divine arrangements so that we can become part of the ongoing effort in His plan for salvation for those in our prayers. If the opportunities and appointments that arise seem surprising and miraculous

at times, remember that it is God who is at work—He loves the person you are praying for!

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive with Christ. —Ephesians 2:4-5

It is my fervent hope that we at St. Luke's will actively engage in our evangelism ministry by becoming deeply committed, praying people. I encourage each of you to use this Daily Prayer Guide, that we as a congregation might become powerful pray-ers.

✠ Rev. Santa Anna Trejo
Evangelism Team Leader

Deacon Candidate

On March 14, 2009, the Committee on Ordained Ministry of the West District of the Texas Annual Conference certified DeAndre Johnson as a candidate for ministry. We rejoice with him on this step towards ordination!



Daily Prayer Guide

- Pray at the start of each day.
- Pray before retiring at night.
- Remember that prayer is **more than a one-time activity**. It is an attitude, thus we can truly pray without ceasing.

- Remind ourselves of the four dimensions of prayer:

1. **Supplication**
(your own needs)
and intercession
(others' needs)
2. **Communion**
(intimacy with God)
3. **Patient pleading**
(patiently waiting on His answer as you continue to bring the same concerns)
4. **Giving thanks**
(the attitude of gratitude)

Of these four dimensions, evangelism is most focused on intercession and the needs of others. It is well to remember that the more we pray, the more power we have in prayer!

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weekly discussions, which is an awesome experience. I also find it really cool that as our group has developed, we've gone from a pre-written study, to studies concocted by Andrew, to discussions that are made up completely of our own thoughts and opinions.

WHERE AND WHEN DOES THE COLLEGE BIBLE STUDY MEET?

Andrew: We have met weekly at various locations. It started out at The Heights apartment complex, then as we continued to develop, Jackie and I felt it was time to move it into our house to welcome them into our lives. Once we did that, a lot of growth and connection took place. Because of a few reasons, we are currently meeting at Coffee Station in College Station. First, our house is a little small for the number of students attending. Second, this a great opportunity to possibly engage other people in the community in conversation who might not otherwise come to a "Bible study," although I hesitate to use that term. Yes, we study the Bible. But we also explore broader topics of faith, like questions we have about Christianity and the world we live in that we're afraid to ask in church. The college group right now is exploring questions we have about the previous Sunday morning's sermon. The college group has become, from our point of view, so much more than a "Bible study" as the term is usually used. We meet Thursdays at 8 pm.

WHY AND HOW DO YOU THINK THIS MINISTRY HAS FLOURISHED?

Andrew: I think it has flourished for a number of reasons. First, as I already mentioned, moving the study into our house gave the students a stable place, one that was lived in, not sterile or neutral. A place where they know they are welcome, where they know they aren't guests, but, for lack of a better word, family. Secondly, the students are not afraid to invite their friends. Almost all of the students who regularly come have come by invitation of someone within the group. Finally, the freedom that Jason has given us has been huge. Being free to organize and study as we choose, with limited direction, has allowed the group to grow as it has. I feel that if the group was more rigidly controlled (i.e., "study this for this many weeks, then study this") then the group would have been stifled. Everyone who comes knows that they have the opportunity to suggest a topic for study and to ask any question, at any time.

Ginny: I don't think any of us began this with the idea to create a big college group; all growth has come through relationship and reaching out through invitation. Because this com-

munity is so important to all of our lives, it's completely natural to want to share it with others so that they can experience the same feelings of belonging.

IN YOUR EXPERIENCE, WHAT HAS GOD DONE AND CAN DO THROUGH SMALL GROUPS?

Andrew: I think anyone can see what God has done already. The college ministry of St. Luke's has tripled in size since the start of the fall semester. I believe God has just started showing what He can and wants to do. I don't believe we have seen but the tip of the iceberg of what God has in store for our group. I fully believe we are seeing Acts 2:46-47 being lived out in our Bible Study. The sense of community and belonging that has developed within the group is astounding. We have members of our study over to our house two to three nights a week.

When we have conversation at our house, the last students leave our house after midnight. They come for conversation and study at 8 pm and stay for fellowship, games, darts, movies, and

food. They definitely stay for food! As to how this translates to St. Luke's as a whole, there is no reason why the success and growth that has been seen in the college study can't and shouldn't be seen in other small groups within our church. The key has been to open the group and ourselves to others, to not be afraid to be known.

Ginny: I would definitely encourage anyone and everyone to become involved in some sort of small group study. In my experience, this is one of the most profound ways to grow spiritually, maintain accountability, form deep relationships, and experience wonderful fellowship.

✎ Andrew Hook
College Group Co-Leader

✎ Ginny Griggs, College Student

✎ Rev. Jason Burnham
Interviewer



Just the Signs of the Times?

The Trustees of St. Luke's are charged with the supervision, oversight and care of everything the church owns. Here's their report:

SIGNS POSTED

St. Luke's outdoor worship center and construction site have been posted with "No Trespassing" signs. The signs are mainly in the creek area and at the entrance to both properties. There have been numerous thefts of petrified wood from the creek and outdoor worship area, along with drinking



parties and littering. Additionally, posting signs at the construction site is of critical importance because of liability issues for our contractor. These signs are not to discourage visitors from enjoying the worshipful nature of the Villa Maria

property, but to discourage the unlawful abuse of the property. The Trustees will continue to explore more welcoming and inviting

ways that our signs can relay public availability and expectations at the outdoor worship center.

For your own safety, please only view the construction site from a distance.

CHICK LANE

The Boyd family will continue to lease the house on Chick Lane for six more months. The six-month lease will begin April 1.

Walter Cagle
Trustees Chair

Finance Committee Report

St. Luke's operating needs total \$13,370 per month. Here is the church's income during the first quarter of 2009:



January 2009

\$14,036.41 (\$666 more than budgeted)



February 2009

\$10,159.75 (\$3,210 less than budgeted)



March 2009

\$12,882.99 (\$487 less than budgeted)



Now that we have signed our contract with Oakwood Construction Company (OCC) for the remaining construction, you are encouraged to begin and/or continue to meet your commitments to the Building a Living House campaign. Thus far—since October 2008—fulfilled pledges total **\$65,324**.

P.O. Box 1012 | Bryan, TX 77806

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

St. Luke's