



The people of the United Methodist Church

E-MESSENGER

Open hearts
Open minds
Open doors

Saint Luke United Methodist Church

Volume 2024, No. 7

Wednesday, April 10, 2024

Available at: stlukeumchaltomcity.org



To hope, to believe, or love?

I am due for my annual physical in May. Yes it's the responsible thing to do. No, it's not up there on my list of top ten things to do. You know what's coming. Check cholesterol numbers, monitor blood sugar levels, order additional lab tests, and the always helpful suggestion from the doctor that this might be a good time to shed a few more pounds. If we really are fearfully and wonderfully made, we also have to admit there are days when we look in a mirror and sense more fear than wonder.

Have you ever wondered how incredibly well the body actually works on most days? Think with me for a bit. On an average day we breathe 21,600 times, blink our eyes 16,800 times, while our hearts quietly go about beating 103,680 times in a 24-hour period - all of that happening with incredible efficiency - and we never once have to stop and tell our hearts to beat, our eyes to blink, or our lungs to breathe. It's incredibly amazing.

When you think about it; it's all embedded deeply in our DNA, and it's such a natural part of who we are we rarely even think about it. We just take it for granted that every day, every night our bodies will simply do what they were designed to do.

So if God is the one who designed us, and if we really believe we're fearfully and wonderfully made in God's image, why do we still think we have to wake up every day and decide if we're going to hope, or believe, or love? If we don't have to tell our eyes to blink, or our lungs to breathe, or our hearts to beat, what makes us think we have to instruct our minds to believe, or our souls to hope, or our hearts to love?

Maybe it's already there inside of us and we just never realized it. The ability to hope, believe, and love coming from deep inside of us and as natural as the breaths we take every day.

Sometimes it takes a skilled physician to show you what's really going on inside of you. A good doctor will point out all the bad stuff and tell you to watch it. God, on the other hand, will tell you about all the good inside of you and tell you to trust it.

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Psalm 139:14

Now these three remain. Faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love. I Corinthians 13:13

Faith makes all things possible; hope makes all things work; love makes all things beautiful. Love leads you to hope; hope builds faith; faith brings you closer to God; so keep loving, keep hoping, and always have faith in God.

In Christian love and grace, Mel



2024 Easter Cross

We want to extend a thank you to Anna Allen and Carol Negrozio for creating our beautiful Easter Cross this year. A special thank you goes to Martha Chapman to sharing flowers out of her yard which included irises, a rose, and bluebonnets.



Second Chance Resale Shop Yard Sale
Saturday, April 20 • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Everything on sale for 50 cents except for jewelry and the curio cabinet.



Upper Room Devotional

Read John 20:19-31

Our story goes back to the very beginning of the community that would become the church. Only ten followers of Jesus are present: Judas has betrayed Jesus to the authorities and is no longer with them, and Thomas is absent. It is the night of the Resurrection, though the disciples have only heard what has happened from Mary. Understandably, they are behind closed doors, locked off from the world, fearful, afraid to come out of hiding, endangered, uncertain, directionless. Their prospects don't look good. Frankly, they look disastrous.

This is the perilous beginning of the community that would become the church. Their teacher and mentor has just been convicted of subversive speech, has been executed by a dishonorable crucifixion, and has been buried. They wonder whether they'll be next. Their future looks darker than dark. Then, against all odds, that same Jesus is in the room with them. And Jesus gives them new life.

This is the Gospel of John's most important story about the resilience of caring communities. These first ten followers of Jesus stuck together when they were under the gravest of threats. Facing their end and the end of their community, they didn't abandon one another. But, really, they only came to life when Jesus appeared. They were overjoyed! This is the true meaning of the Resurrection. When the future of a community of Jesus' followers seems humanly lost, the risen Jesus reappears among them—over and over—and makes hope possible again.

Many early Christian communities, doing the best they could but facing life-threatening forces, saw themselves in this story. It gave them the strength to go on. It happened once, at the very beginning, and it can happen again. Caring communities rely on something—Someone—bigger than themselves.

And then there was Thomas. For whatever reason, he wasn't there when his friends huddled behind closed doors, fearing for their lives, trying to keep their little community together. And then, when they told him what had happened, how Jesus had appeared and given them life, he wouldn't believe them. Thomas the doubter. Thomas: not the model member of a caring community.

The thing is, for all of later hearers of this story, Thomas represents us! In the Gospel of John, Thomas stands in for all of us who were not there in the room where it happened, who were not part of that first little group of followers fearing their end, who doubt that Jesus will reappear, who lose confidence in our own Christian communities and wonder if they are worth it.

Thomas was not convinced he should commit to his new community. But he got a second chance. A week later, when he was back together with Jesus' followers still hiding behind closed doors, Jesus appears to him, too. Jesus shows him the scars of his execution, and Thomas finally believes. Then, Jesus speaks to all the rest of us, all of us who may at times doubt the presence of the Spirit and the resilience of the Christian community to which we belong: "Do you believe because you see me? Blessed are those who don't see and yet believe."

Prayer REQUESTS

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK...

Continued Prayer Concerns: Jeanne Anne Pharis; French Congregation & the people of the Congo; Pat Farmer; Jack & Jerrie Lucko; Byron Lechler; Betty Holshouser; Scott Paris; Burt & Marylou Moore; Barbara Jones; Charles & Pat Hooper; Alice Cook; Jo Wommack; Melissa Lechler & her son, Lucas; Toni Hood's granddaughter-in-law, Christin; Buddy & DeeDee Hill's grandson, Milo; Darren Isbell; Betty Ann Carter; Ed Baker; George & Karen Angle's daughter-in-law, Kristine; Clifford & Marilyn Smith; Sandra Mason; Mel & Susan Bishara's family in Israel and their nephew, Jimmy; Bob Watkins & family; Peggy Fallin; Raymond Hames; Bonnie Richards; Rory Yocum; Rose Mascari & her son; Art & Cathy Gordon; Larea Phippen; Joe Crawford; Ovella Russell; Stanislas Ndecky's mother; those affected by the wildfires in Texas Panhandle; Mark Chandler's father; David Stapp; Linda Wills with the loss of her father, Ben Byrd; Jim Whittenburg with the loss of his wife, Sandra

This Week's Concerns: those affected by the earthquake in Taiwan; Doris Crocker; Barbara Porvenzano with the loss of her nephew, Douglas Etchison; the people of the southern of Israel and Gaza; those affected by flooding, wildfires; isolation & loneliness; gun violence each day in our country; the people of Ukraine & the world; prayers for our nation

Our Military: Ryan Kelly Hampton; Kyle Johnson; Krystal Calvert; Evan Hill; Matt Miller; Nathaniel Hill; Alex Sullivan-Green; Harrison Lenox; Junior Chowe

The earliest followers of Jesus faced the challenge of creating communities unlike any that had existed before. And they accepted that challenge under the harshest threats. Because of their courage born of their faith in the risen Lord, we still live in Christian communities of all kinds, and we continue to find that Jesus Christ is the source of our own courage to build and sustain them.

God, give us the continuing courage to build up the Christian communities of which we are a part and for which we deeply care. Amen.



**March 2024
Receipts:
\$18,065**

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

EMMANUEL CLASS:

We had nine members in class with three visitors from the PIF Class. A big thank you to our children for their performance on Palm Sunday, March 24. We are proud of everyone of them. Also, thank you to their teachers, George and Mary Paris and Linda Schmidt. We also want to thank Mark Chandler and the choir members for the music they provided on Good Friday and Easter morning. Congratulations to Susan Briles and Tommie Martin for receiving Service Pins from the United Methodist Women for their service to our church. Thank you for all you have done and are doing. Continued prayers for Joe Crawford and David Stapp.
Mary Ross

TITHES & OFFERINGS

Please continue your financial support of St. Luke United Methodist Church. There are several ways to contribute that include mailing your offering to the church office or giving online through our website, stlukeumchaltomcity.org.

You may also use your banking online payment services to make your contributions every month.

Thank you for your continued support of St. Luke United Methodist Church!

April 8, 2024 Eclipse



St. Luke UMC Eclipse Watch Party Participants:

Michael, Michelle, Matthew, Mariah, George and Mary Paris; Susan Briles; Barbara and Lou Provenzano and Mel Bishara who took the photograph.



Wednesday Morning Prayer Group & Bible Study

April 17 † Fellowship Hall

Prayer Group † 9:00 a.m.

Bible Study † 10:00 a.m.

Book of Hebrews

We invite you to join us next Wednesday.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Dr. Martha is asking for volunteers to work in the OLD Resale Shop to go through bags and boxes to get merchandise ready for sale. Call Dr. Martha at 817/269-9654 to schedule a time to work.



The next *E-Messenger* Newsletter will be published **April 24** and all submissions need to be in the church office by April 22. Thank you!



St. Luke United Methodist Church
 3200 Denton Highway
 Haltom City, TX 76117
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The *E-Messenger* newsletter is published bi-weekly online. Deadline for submission of articles is 9:00 a.m. every Monday. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space.

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Sunday Services: Sunday School • 9:15 a.m.

In-person and Online Worship • 10:30 a.m.

French Worship Service • 2:00 p.m.

Office Hours: Monday thru Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Friday 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

NEWSLETTER ONLINE AT:
www.stlukeumchaltomcity.org

Sunday, April 14, 2024

3rd Sunday of Easter

9:15 a.m. Sunday School
 10:30 a.m. Morning Worship Service
 2:00 p.m. French Worship Service

Monday, April 15, 2024

No Activities

Tuesday, April 16, 2023

No Activities

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

9:00 a.m. Prayer Group
 10:00 a.m. Wednesday Morning Bible Study
 6:00 p.m. Youth Activities
 6:00 p.m. French Congregation Bible Study
 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, April 18, 2024

9:00 a.m. UMM Breakfast—Bluebonnet Café

Friday, April 19, 2024

10:00 a.m. Second Chance Resale Shop

Saturday, April 20, 2024

10:00 a.m. Second Chance Resale Shop

Sunday, April 21, 2024

4th Sunday of Easter

9:15 a.m. Sunday School
 10:30 a.m. Morning Worship Service
 2:00 p.m. French Worship Service

Monday, April 22, 2024

Newsletter Submission DEADLINE

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

No Activities

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

9:00 a.m. Prayer Group
 10:00 a.m. Wednesday Bible Study
 6:00 p.m. Youth Activities
 6:00 p.m. French Congregation Bible Study
 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal



**Join us for worship every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for
 In-Person Worship or Online Worship via our
 Facebook page & You Tube:
 SLUMC—Haltom City**

**Sunday, April 14, 2024 • 10:30 a.m.
 Third Sunday of Easter**

Sunday School • 9:15 a.m.

Weekly Attendance • March 20
 Prayer Group—10
 Wednesday Bible Study—18
 Youth—6
 French Bible Study—8
 UMM Breakfast • March 21—6

Sunday, March 24, 2024 • 10:30 a.m.
 Sunday School—62
 In-Person Worship—87
 Online Worship—262
 French Worship Service—45

Weekly Attendance • March 27
 Wednesday Bible Study—15
 Youth Activities—5
 UMM Breakfast • March 28—3
 Maundy Thursday Service—18
 Maundy Thursday Online Worship—106
 Good Friday Tenebrae Service—41
 Good Friday Online Worship—128

Sunday, March 31, 2024 • 10:30 a.m.
 Sunday School—71
 In-Person Worship—114
 Online Worship—127
 French Worship Service—52

Weekly Attendance • April 3
 Prayer Group—6
 Wednesday Bible Study—17
 Youth Activities—5
 French Bible Study—8
 UMM Breakfast • April 4—6

Sunday, April 7, 2024 • 10:30 a.m.
 Sunday School—60
 In-Person Worship—76
 Online Worship—88
 Both congregations met on this first Sunday of
 April to share communion and worship.