THE JOURNEY

The road to Bethlehem

December 2011 ~ Volume 13, Issue 12  www.stlukeslubbock.org
A Message from Our Senior Pastor

I love the Advent and Christmas season! I love the getting ready for Jesus to come and the powerful experience of His presence with us in so many ways. I love all the giving and all the family time. I love stockings hung by the fire and Christmas mornings in my PJ’s. I love the building anticipation and excited expectation from the youngest to the oldest.

Check out the anticipation and expectation of some of the youngest in these letters to Santa:

**Dear Santa,**

*When you come to my house there will be cookies for you. But if you are real hungry you can use our phone and order a pizza to go.*

**Dear Santa,**

*I want a Puppy. I want a playhouse. Thank you. I've been good most of the time. Sometimes though, I get a little wild.*

**Dear Santa,** *(From a 6-year-old)*

*I'll take anything because I haven't been that good.*

**Dear Santa,**

*I'm not going to ask for a lot. Here’s my list: The Etch-A-Sketch animator, 2 packs of #2 pencils, Crayola fat markers and the big gift...my own color TV! Well, maybe you could drop the pencils; I don't want to be really selfish.*

**Dear Santa,**

*If my brother has been bad, do I get all his gifts?*

**Dear Santa,**

*I have been really good all year long but don't ask Mommy and Daddy if it's true.*

**Dear Santa,**

*TRY NOT TO WAKE UP MY GRANDMA, SHE'LL BE SLEEPING IN THE LIVINGROOM AND SHE CAN BE A GRUMPY BEAR!*

Make no mistake, our expectations and anticipation of what Jesus desires to do in our lives makes a huge difference in what we actually trust Him to do in us and through us. One of the great “anticipators” in all of scripture is a man named Simeon. (Luke 2:21-35) Simeon had waited his entire life to see Jesus, the Consolation of Israel. When Simeon saw the baby Jesus and perceived His true identity, he responded in a three key ways that are both illustrative and instructive for all of us who long for the presence of Jesus in our day as well.

First, we see that Simeon rejoiced in Jesus. He gladly and exuberantly gave God praise. This Christmas season if you don’t do anything else make sure that you and your family, make the time and make the priority of worshipping Jesus. This season is not about all the glitter but rather about the grace of God made real in the person of Jesus Christ made available to all who will put their faith in Him.
Second, we see that Simeon embraced Jesus. Simeon didn’t just observe Jesus from a distance. He didn’t just point and say, “Man, isn’t that baby so cute.” Simeon, took the baby Jesus and he held Him in his arms. This Christmas, don’t be content with a mere knowledge about Jesus rather than a real knowing of Jesus; don’t settle for going through the motions of faith without an experience of a radical intimacy with Him; don’t accept being on the sidelines when it comes to a vital and powerful relationship with God that truly makes a difference. Grab hold of Him, get in the game! Our sermon series this Advent is “Journey to Bethlehem.” It’s all about how we are called to journey with Jesus in our day to day lives.

Third, we see that Simeon blessed Jesus. This Christmas season, let the Lord bless others through you. Our Christmas projects this year include Christmas Boxes from the South Plains Foodbank (We’re aiming at doing 100), Christmas Help For Needy Families (We’re adopting 50 families from CPS), Water for the World (We’re raising $10,000 to help build water wells), and our Christmas Eve outreach called Random Acts of Christmas Love (We will take homemade Christmas goodies to over 100 places of business and service who have to work on Christmas Eve).

Last year I shared a Christmas paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 13. Enough folks found it helpful that I thought it might be worth sharing again:

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love to my family...I’m just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my friends and family...I’m just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, sing carols in the nursing home and give to charity, but do not show love to my friends and loved ones...it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir’s cantata, but do not focus on Christ...I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child. Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the husband.

Love is kind, though harried and tired. Love doesn’t envy another’s home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens. Love doesn’t yell at the kids to get out of the way. Love doesn’t give only to those who are able to give in return, but rejoices in giving to those who can’t.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love never fails.

Video games will break, Pearl necklaces will be lost, Golf clubs will rust...But giving the gift of love will endure forever.

With great anticipation of His coming anew and afresh to us,

[Signature]

Andys Dream List

- 100 Advent Invitations: 100 people in our church who will intentionally ask and bring a friend to St. Luke’s during this Advent Season.
- 100 Christmas Boxes ($25 a box) for needy families. We have almost 80 at this time.
- 100% Every member of St. Luke’s sharing in God’s Extravagant Generosity; All those who have yet to turn in an “Estimate of Giving Card” to do so before the end of the year.
- $100K of end of year gifts to help us be both solvent and purposeful as we end 2011 and begin 2012 so that we can expand and further God’s Kingdom.
- 1000 + Christmas Eve worshippers giving praise to our Newborn King.
- 10 leaders to lead new small groups beginning in January 2012.
Ladies Prayer Group

Every Tuesday Morning
8:30 - 9:30 AM Central Room 6
Please Join Us!
For questions contact
Vicki at 796-0778 or
Cindy at 795-5937

EHLERS SMALL GROUP
“BETTER TOGETHER” by Rick Warren
1st & 3rd Monday of each month

Our group started a new study on Monday, Nov. 7th.
This is a six week video series with devotional book with
the following topics:

1. What Matters Most
2. Reaching Out to Others
3. Belonging Together
4. Growing Together
5. Serving Together
6. Worshiping Together

This study is to show participants how God planned for
you to fulfill His purposes in community with other
people...in your church family...in your small group...in
the world around you.

Free!!!
Try the fitness craze that’s sweeping the world!
Burn serious calories while having a great time!

Class times:
Thursdays – 6pm at St. Luke’s SW
Saturdays – 9am at St. Luke’s Central

**Child Care Available!
**$3 per child ($9 max)
24 hr. advance notice required

GARAGE DOORS - ROLLING STEEL
ELECTRIC OPENERS - COMMERCIAL - RESIDENTIAL
SALES - SERVICE - INSTALLATION

RAIDER GARAGE DOORS
John Williams
(806)747-9746
1-800-766-2074
Lubbock, TX 79403

ZETA ALPHA CHI SMALL GROUP
MEETS SUNDAY EVENINGS AT THE THOMASON’S HOME.
THIS GROUP INCLUDES FAMILIES WITH PRESCHOOL AND
ELEMENTARY AGED CHILDREN. MEMBERS BRING A
COVERED DISH DINNER. CHILDCARE IS PROVIDED AT
SW CAMPUS, CONTACT SARA LATTIMORE OR
TESSA ARMES.

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Jim Potts Auto Glass
Lubbock's leader in Consumer Safety and Trust
Dealers for Electric Scooters

2304 Avenue J
Lubbock, Texas 79411
www.jimpottsautoglass.com

1-806-765-7877
1-800-319-3405
FAX: (806)765-8109

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In November, the Kids LIVE group did an outreach/mission event. They went to neighborhood houses near the SW campus, gave church info to around 70 families and collected 132 pounds of food for the South Plains Food Bank. We are so proud of them!

We have had an amazing semester of fellowship, service, food, devotionals and music at Kids LIVE. It has been such a blessing to watch the kids grow in Christ while spending time with each other. During the month of December, we will be spending Sunday evenings with the church family at all of the wonderful Advent activities. Kids LIVE will resume on January 8th, so mark your calendar.

Fall Festival
Central hosted its annual fall festival with over 300 in attendance. Special thanks to the St. Luke’s Youth for their hard work and dedication to this community event year after year.

Freaky Fun Night
Freaky Fun Night at the SW campus was an amazing success with over 350 church and community members in attendance. Families spent the evening playing games and spending quality time together.

*A special thanks goes to Robin Wolfington for organizing the event!*
December 2nd
Children join us for a night of FUN!
“Christmas FUN”
Deadline to register is
4 pm on Thursday,
December 1st at the
Central Campus office.

Children’s Ministry Upcoming Events:

- December 2\textsuperscript{nd} - 6:30-10pm FUN Night
- December 3\textsuperscript{rd} - 5:15 pm Progressive Dinner @ SW
- December 4\textsuperscript{th} - 5:30 pm Tree Trimming @ C
- December 11\textsuperscript{th} - 5pm Carols & Candles @ C
- December 24\textsuperscript{th} - 4pm Family Style Christmas Eve Service @ SW

- January 8\textsuperscript{th} - Kids LIVE! resumes
- January 11\textsuperscript{th} - Kids Quest resumes

A NOTE FROM THE YOUTH PASTOR:

Happy December to all! I love this time of the year and its my prayer that the birth of Jesus continues to make an impact on you and yours this holiday season.

A few dates for you:
December 4 we will be helping needy families for Christmas again. This year, it will look a little bit different, but the concept is the same. On December 4 - in all services, we will have tables set up at both campuses for our church families and individuals to come and pick names - names that we have selected with the help of Children’s Protective Services. The idea is to choose the name(s) of the families and go shop for the kids (without the kids present, it will just be your family and the parents of the kids in need). As well, we are encouraging you to get a gift for the parents. This is our way of giving back AND building relationships. This is a great way to start an inlet into our church family. We want to do more than simply buy gifts without truly “reaching out”. We are asking for you to be finished shopping by Friday, December 16.

Our annual Youth Trucker Christmas JAM will be Sunday night the 18th of December!
Buy a White Elephant gift from a truck stop and come dressed up! We will have food and lots of laughs.

We will have all regular scheduled Devo sessions on Wednesday nights and Sunday nights except the following:

- No JAM on 12/25
- No JAM on 1/1

The year has flown by. Do not let the time go by without showing love, sharing love, and speaking love all in His name and honor.

Merry Christmas to all.

Love,
Jon Matthews, Youth Director
Kara Shelton, Youth Intern
Date: Thursday, December 15th
Time: 11:30 AM
Place: Central Fellowship Hall
RSVP by: Monday, December 12th

St. Luke’s 2011
Income & Debt Reduction

Building Debt Reduction
October 2011

$2000000
Original Building Debt

$1625704
Current Building Debt

$0
Debt Free

St. Luke’s 2011 Budget
Income & Expense

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St. Luke’s
United Methodist Women
December 6, 2011
10:30 a.m.
Home of Wanda Baker
3102 46th Street
Pot Luck Luncheon

Rev. Don Kinder will present the program.

UMW members participate in Bible and mission studies and participate in local mission work at St. Luke’s and in Lubbock. They are currently collecting hygiene items for the St. Luke’s Good Samaritan Fund and soup labels and box tops for education coupons. Donations may be made to any UMW member. For further information call Jo Ann Smith at 795-1434.

Please RSVP to Wanda Baker at 799-4208 for the luncheon.
Each Advent Season, St. Luke’s Lubbock looks to partner with special outreach needs in our church, community and world. This year, St. Luke’s Lubbock will focus on several opportunities with details on each opportunity to come on Sunday mornings as well in the church bulletin and on the church website.

**South Plains Food Bank**
Additional offerings can be made to purchase Christmas Food Boxes ($25 each) from the South Plains Food Bank. We have received some funding already, but our goal is food for 100 families at Christmas at a total cost of $2,500 through December 12.

**Families with Children in Need**
On December 4th and 11th we will partner with Children’s Protection Service to help families in need to purchase gifts for Christmas. CPS will reach an estimated 600 children this Christmas season and St. Luke’s Lubbock has agreed to sponsor 50 families. As the children of God, we want to share the love and compassion of Jesus Christ with these families and not just write a check to cover a financial need. To accomplish that goal, there will be a “giving tree” at each campus with the names of these families. Each family will be unique with a varying number of family members and needs. You get to prayerfully choose the family you will sponsor. Then you will contact this family and set up a time to take them shopping! You will meet with the adult in the family that is going to be providing the gifts for these children. They will have a wish list from the children provided through CPS. You will help them shop and you will purchase the gifts. The children will only know their family gave them gifts for Christmas, not the church or some stranger. You will show the love of Jesus Christ to the parents or guardians of the children and they can share that love through the gift of a toy(s) these kids have dreamed about. Additionally, you should ask if these adults have a need that you could fill; such as a new outfit for mom to wear to work, good boots for the dad, a warm coat, or maybe pots and pans for the kitchen. You get to put hands, feet, a face and a name on the supernatural movement of Jesus in the lives of these families who quite possibly up until their encounter with you had no hope at all.

**Water for the World**
On December 18th we will begin to focus on “Water for the World.” At least five million people die yearly from water related diseases, including 2.2 million children under the age of five. St. Luke’s Lubbock is partnering with Light of Life Ministries to fabricate metal molds to construct basic water-filter systems for rural families in Guatemala. Zack Peterson, a former St. Luke’s Lubbock church member, has moved to Guatemala as a missionary. By providing methods for families to have clean drinking water, Zack is able to establish relationships to offer the gospel of Jesus Christ. Each mold costs $500 to fabricate and we want to provide this ministry with two of them so they can begin making these bio-sand filter systems to give to hundred of families.

We will also partner with World Vision to provide funding for water wells and pumps around the world. A foot pump to help local people get water from existing wells costs about $200. $2,600 will provide drilling funds for a 60 foot water-well for local communities and $13,700 will provide drilling funds for a “Deep Well” fitted with a foot pump that can provide up to 2,800 gallons of safe water for 300 people a day! In many communities, clean water is hundreds of feet below layers of hard rock so the traditional 60 foot well is not possible. Children have no choice but to walk long distances to find water that is often dirty and disease-ridden. A clean water source can cut a community’s child mortality rate by as much as half.

On December 24th we will take a special offering during our Christmas Eve services for a special ministry opportunity that will be announced during the services.

For questions, call Pastors Matt, Andy or Don in the church office or e-mail mwolfington@stlukeslubbock.org
A New Advent Event!!

"LUX...presents Hollywood!"

Lux Radio Theatre was a long-running live radio show (1935-1955) which featured adaptations from Broadway and Hollywood and starred original cast members...like Jimmy Stewart, Donna Reed, Lauren Bacall, John Wayne and many others.

Presented by NBC and CBS before a live audience, the LUX Theatre productions also required a Foley Sound Effects artist who utilized a wide variety of objects to create sounds; such as a door opening and closing, telephones ringing and climbing steps. The Foley artists were visible to the studio audience but the listeners at home could only hear the sounds and the voices of the actors.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 18th at 6:00 p.m., as St. Luke’s presents a live re-creation of a LUX Theatre broadcast of "It's a Wonderful Life." The stars of our production will be members of both the Central and Southwest campuses and you will want to see how our Foley artists craft non-electronic sound effects to enhance the performance.

Bring your own sack-supper and a dessert to share. We’ll supply the iced tea and water. Don’t miss this chance to be the “live studio audience” and spend a relaxing evening in Bedford Falls...err, the Fellowship Hall, Central Campus.

Dream Day Update

The dreams of September 18th were presented at our Charge Conference this past month, and they will be coming before the whole congregation in the beginning of January. We will have both an online and written church wide survey to let everyone offer their feedback and input to our Dream Day process. Keep Jennifer Tyler and her associates in your prayers as they prepare this study for our congregation.
St. Luke’s United Methodist Church
3708 45th Street
Lubbock, TX 79413
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Go on the Advent Journey with St. Luke’s

CELEBRATION

Saturday, Dec. 3rd @ 6pm
Progressive Dinner at St. Luke’s SW
 Begins at 6pm in the homes of church members and the “progress” to the SW for a catered meal, dessert, and tree trimming. Cost is $10 per person. Sign up for the home of your choice in the church office or on Sunday, November 27. Call Tessa for childcare by Dec. 1st. (771-0535 x302)

Sunday, Dec. 4th @ 5:30pm
Tree Trimming at St. Luke’s Central
Following a family potluck meal and decoration making in fellowship hall, children will decorate the central campus Christmas tree in the sanctuary during a fun reading of the Christmas story!

Sunday, Dec. 11th @ 5pm
“Carols and Candles: The Gift of Faith”
Celebrate the birth of Jesus with St. Luke’s through drama, music and a candle light service. The story is cleverly interwoven with spirited choral and instrumental music. At St. Luke’s Central.

Sunday, Dec. 18th @ 6pm
It’s A Wonderful Life
This is live reading of “It’s a Wonderful Life” in the spirit of the golden era of radio. Expect a fun and memorable evening! At Fellowship Hall in St. Luke’s Central.

MISSION

Sunday, Nov. 27th
An offering will be collected to purchase additional Christmas Food Boxes ($25 each) from the South Plains Food Bank to hand out during the Christmas season.

Sundays, Dec. 4th, 11th
We will partner with Children’s Protection Service to help families in need purchase gifts for Christmas. CPS will reach an estimate 600 children this Christmas season and St. Luke’s Lubbock has agreed to sponsor 50 families. Look for the “giving tree” at each campus to select a family.

Sunday, Dec. 18th
We will begin to focus on “Water for the World.” At least five million people die yearly from water related diseases, including 2.2 million children under the age of five. St. Luke’s Lubbock is partnering with World Vision to provide funding for water wells and pumps around the world and Light of Life Ministries to fabricate metal molds to construct basic water-filter systems for rural families in Guatemala.

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24th
We will take a special offering during our Christmas Eve services for special ministry opportunity that will be announced during the services.

WORSHIP

The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem is our sermon series for this Advent Season. Come journey with us as we come face to face with both the struggles and the faith challenges of the pivotal players in Christ’s coming.

Sundays, Dec. 4th, 11th, 18th
“The Journey” Sunday morning worship 8:30am & 10:45am @ St. Luke’s Central
10:30am @ St. Luke’s SW

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24th
Noon - Family Communion Service @ Central
4pm - “Blue Jeans & Baby Jesus” @ SW
6pm - Traditional Candlelight @ Central
6pm - Traditional Candlelight @ SW
11pm - “A Simple Christmas Eve” @ Central

Christmas Morning, Sunday, Dec. 25th
Worship Celebration 10am @ Central
Worship Celebration 10am @ SW