



Trinity United Methodist Church Newsletter



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REMEMBER TO SET YOUR CLOCKS BACK AN HOUR ON SATURDAY NIGHT

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Understanding the New Testament The Gospels: The Gospel of Luke

³ I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed. Luke 1:3 NRSV

²³ Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work. He was the son (as was thought) of Joseph son of Heli, ... ³⁸ son of Enos, son of Seth, son of Adam, son of God. Luke 3:23, 38 NRSV

²⁰ Then he looked up at his disciples and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Luke 6:20 NRSV

The Gospel of Luke is the first book of a two volume work. The second book is Acts. Something that is not apparent in the translation of these texts is the quality of the written Greek. The quality of Greek used in Luke is superior to that used in either Matthew or Mark. Moreover, it is written in a Greek format used for histories. Taken together the two volumes do provide a history of the Church from its beginnings with Jesus and the Disciples through the ministries of the early Disciples and the "thirteenth Disciple" Paul. Church tradition holds that the author was a companion of Paul, possibly the "Luke" referenced in Col. 4:14; Philem. 24; and 2 Tim. 4:11. It is usually dated between 80 and 85 CE. Both volumes were written to a certain Theophilus. The name was not uncommon and some have speculated that Theophilus was a highly placed Roman Administrator in a place to help Christians who were being persecuted. However, literally translated the name means "lover of God" or "God's Beloved." Most scholars believe that the book is addressed to the Church; "God's Beloved."

Although the author may have been Jewish there is reason to believe that he fully embraced Paul's theology that Christ came for the salvation of the world. Unlike Matthew who penned a genealogy that linked Christ to Abraham and emphasized Jesus' Jewish heritage, Luke's genealogy traces Jesus back to Adam, the "son" of God. Luke 3:38.

One of the most distinctive aspects of the Gospel of Luke is his focus on the poor. This begins early with the magnificat, the song of praise that is attributed to Mary before Jesus' birth:

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty. Luke 1:51-53.

This theme is enhanced with the birth of Jesus in a manger, the meanest of accommodations. Rather than wise scholars discerning Jesus' birth as a King from the position of the stars, angels give the news to shepherds in a field. Shepherds at that time were looked upon much as gypsies in later day European culture. They were not prosperous farmers, but people who had no homes but the tents they lived in and who wandered the hills. Thus, the first people to receive the Good News of the birth of Jesus were among the lowliest in the land. When Jesus begins his ministry, he uses the Isaiah text describing the Jubilee Year, the time when all debts were supposed to be forgiven and slaves were to be freed:

He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.*

*He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,*

¹⁹ *to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

²⁰ *And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." Luke 4:16-21. NRSV.*

Where Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew, blesses the "poor in Spirit," Jesus in the Sermon on the Plain in Luke blesses the poor and hungry. Luke 6:20-21. In the parable "the Rich Man and Lazarus" the rich man is sentenced to everlasting torment not because he was evil but because he was indifferent to the suffering of Lazarus. Lazarus enters into an afterlife of bliss not because he was good but because he had none of the good things while he was living. Luke 16:19-31. The "Rich Fool" fails to be "rich toward God," hoarding all he owns. Luke 12:13-21. Again and again, Luke warns about the danger of allowing wealth to get between you and a relationship with God.

Luke is the last of the synoptics (See the article on the Gospel of Mark.) It has almost all of the material from Mark and much of the material from the missing "Q source" that the writer of Matthew draws upon. It also has a number of stories unique to Luke. These include the "Rich Fool" and the "Rich Man and Lazarus." Also unique to Luke is the parable of the Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the story of Zacchaeus and many others. In some ways the Gospel of Luke is the richest source in the Bible for the stories and teaching of Jesus.

Above all, Luke wants us to understand that God is a God of love and grace. It is in Luke that we hear the story of the Prodigal Son. After the Son demands his inheritance before his father's death and comes

crawling back home, the Father does not punish but rejoices in the son's repentance. The father models the unending grace of God. And, it is in Luke that Jesus offers a prayer for grace from the cross:

³⁴ *Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." Luke 23:24 NRSV*

Thanks to All Who Helped With Trunk or Treat

We had a great time on Saturday with the Trunk or Treat event. Almost all the adults and children attending were from the community with no other connection with the Church. Thanks to everyone who took the time to make the event a success.

All Saints Sunday

November first, the day after Halloween, is All Saints Day, the day we remember all those who have lived and died in the faith and who helped guide our lives. Every time we recite the Apostles Creed we affirm our belief in the "Communion of Saints," our spiritual connection with all Christians who have ever lived. On Sunday we will celebrate all Saints day. We will remember Mac McAfee, the only member of the Church to die this past year, as well as all those Saints from our own lives.

Children's Church/Nursery

Sunday School and Nursery care is available every Sunday during the Sunday school hour. Children from birth through the 6th grade are welcome. Children's Church and Nursery care are available for Children from birth through pre-k after the Children's Time in worship. We encourage parents to keep their children of Kindergarten age and up in the sanctuary during worship. It's important that our children experience the worship of the Church community from an early age.

Lesson plans are currently available that volunteers can use to lead Children's Church during worship. These lesson plans (almost 100 separate plans) do not require any preparation or pre-planning. Each lesson includes a short Bible Story to be read to the children as well as a corresponding craft project. All supplies for the crafts are on hand in the Nursery.

We need two volunteers each Sunday to provide Children's Church during worship. With enough volunteers it shouldn't be necessary for any adult to miss worship more than one Sunday every two months. If you would be willing to volunteer to help with the Children's Church ministry please see Jeanne Rybolt, Julia Moore, Dawn Stevens or Dana Bauguess to learn more.

Preacher, What Does the Bible Say about ...?

From the time I came to Trinity I have stated on numerous occasions that I am willing to consider a sermon, or sermon series, on any subject that is of concern. If there is a subject upon which you would like me to preach I will consider it. If I do not think it appropriate for a sermon I will explain why. It might also be appropriate to address some issues as part of a Newsletter article or series or as part of the Sunday School curriculum. But, if at all possible, I will seek to speak to these issues that are of interest on Sunday morning.

One purpose of worship is to contemplate our relationship with God and if something is bothering you it is likely bothering others as well.

Thursday Morning Bible Study

The Thursday Morning Bible Study Group meets weekly on Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:30 AM. This week we will continue a study of the Book of Revelation.

Prayer Ministry

The following persons are part of the prayer ministry at Trinity UMC:

Elva Beard	Rachel Newman	Sam Richardson
Larry Eastwood	Kenneth Stevens	Judy Richardson
Leslie Eastwood	Patricia Stevens	Charles Wilson

The members of the prayer ministry of Trinity United Methodist church covenant with one another to pray daily for:

- Those concerns on the prayer list of the Church and for healing of body and spirit for all persons listed;
- For each ministry of the church that each ministry would work to bring the Gospel to those within our community and most especially to bring the Gospel to those who have not yet accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;
- For all the members of the Trinity UMC community that they be led and enabled to live as the Body of Christ;
- For our local community and all its needs, especially for those who are struggling with the burden of poverty;
- For our nation and our world that God help lead the people of the world to live in peace with God's Kingdom.

If you would like to be a part of this ministry (or if you have already spoken to me about it and were inadvertently left off the list) please let me know and I will see that you are added.

Up-Coming Sermons

November 6th: Sermon: It's Good to be Poor? There are passages of scripture that leave us scratching our heads in confusion. My texts are Ephesians 1:11–23 and Luke 6:20–31.

November 13th: Sermon: God of the Living. Too often Christians think about eternal life as something that is to come after we die. But the Christian understanding of Eternal Life is that it starts in the here and now. My Texts are Psalms 139:1-18 and Luke 20:27–38.

Worship Leaders

November 6

Linda Robinson, **Liturgist**

Dawn and Richard Stevens, **Greeters**

Jan and Stacy Bell, **Ushers**

November 13

Erin McKibben, **Liturgist**

Maurice and Joyce Edwards, **Greeters**

Joann Harper and Linda Robinson, **Ushers**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GraceWorks has a shortage on many items in our food pantry, and we need your help restocking it! Here is a list of some very critical items needed in our food pantry: **Critical Needs:** Canned green vegetables (not green beans), Canned beans, Canned meat (not tuna), Cereal, Hamburger Helper type boxed meals, Soup. Please support this important ministry with your regular donations. The box is located beside the side door.

Bishop Paul Mbithi, who, with his wife, are leaders of an African mission for children. He will be visiting our church **November 13** and will speak during the Sunday School hour. All members are encouraged to attend this special time. Our church has been supporting this mission for the past several years. Love offerings will be greatly appreciated.

Hosts and Hostesses for First Sunday Lunch: Please see the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Please add your name to host this occasion for the coming months.

The Nanette Crowell Companions in Christ Sunday School Class is both learning and enjoying a series of videos, narrated by Ray Vanderlann. The videos as well as the narration take place in ancient lands described in the Old Testament. We enjoy discussion about what we are learning and the application of the lessons to our lives. We enjoy fellowship beginning at 9:45 with our study beginning at 10:00. All are welcome to join us as we pursue Biblical truths and the application for our lives.

Birthdays in November

Cheryl Wilson, Greg Locke, Betty Haynes, Ken Strait, Brooks Crowell, Ross Crutcher

Happy Birthday to each of you!