

News from Lois Wilson

Dear Friends,

I am thinking of you and wanted to send a little "hello" your way. I pray daily for St. Luke's and miss all of you dearly.

I have been called to Salem UCC in Doylestown as the Associate Pastor of Youth, Families and Contemporary worship. They have welcomed me with warmth and enthusiasm and I am enjoying getting to know the members of the congregation. It is a ¾ time position that pays what I was making full time at Best Nest! It is such a blessing to finally (after all these years!) be serving a church as my full time job!

In July I spent a week in Cincinnati doing urban missionary work with 8 of our youth. Yes...during the heat wave! It was a wonderful (and exhausting!) experience. A great way to get to know some of the youth and to begin forming a relationship with them.

Hopefully some time within the next 6 to 9 months we will be able to start the process towards ordination.

Since Salem is also in search of a senior pastor, they want to install him/her before I am ordained into my position. I am waiting once again! LOL! Oh well, there is no hurry, and the waiting is teaching me to be patient and entrust God with the entire process.

Please know that I am sending you love and prayers...and big hugs and kisses, too.

You will always, always be very precious to me.

—Lois

Philadelphia Association to Meet at St. Luke's


The Fall Meeting of the Philadelphia Association will be **Sunday, October 23** right here at St. Luke's. It's been many years since our church hosted the meeting and we are honored to host the clergy and delegates for this fall meeting.

September Birthdays



JoAnne Reilly	12
Judy Hollon	15
Judy Whiteley	19
Emily Yemm	21
Adam George	25
Michael Williams	29

Nice to see & hear from...

Beulah Behm	
Evelyn Sonet	
Barbara Weidman	
Gavin White	

September Anniversaries



Harry & Joanne Reilly	13
Pam & Gary Hurlburt	19
Bud & Lillian Hamman	26

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St. Luke's United Church of Christ

September 2011

Stewardship Campaign Coming in October

"Give and it will be given you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back." —Luke 6:38

During the month of October, we will be focusing on stewardship, and our collective call to be good stewards of St. Luke's and the ministries that make us a unique place to worship, serve, and gather as God's people. Each week we will have a variation on the theme of "Count Yourself Blessed," and we will hear a brief stewardship testimony during worship. I'm looking for folks who are interested in sharing a brief 1-2 minute testimony about how participating in giving at St. Luke's has deepened your spiritual life. Please see Pastor Trent if you are interested in sharing. Every member will receive two pledge cards, a financial pledge and a time and talent pledge, and we will have the opportunity to turn those in on the last Sunday of the month.

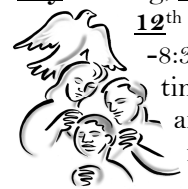


Substitute Musician

As Emily continues her recovery, we welcome Ralph Fisher, organist for Emanuel UCC in Bridesburg, who will be with us on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of September and October, to play for the worship service and direct the choir. Please welcome Ralph and express your gratitude to him for helping us out during this time as we await Emily's return.

Prayer and Reflection— Monday, September 12 at 7 p.m.

This is a time of intentional conversation about ways in which we can become more mindful of the Sacred when the daily grind threatens to separate us from our spiritual center. People flow through the group and still the conversation continues. So if you find yourself yearning for a quiet space and companions on the journey, please join us on **Monday evening, September 12th** from 7:00 p.m. -8:30 p.m. for a time of reflection and discernment.



UCC's 'Mission:1' goals expanded to include \$111,111 church-wide appeal for East Africa famine relief

Mission:1, the United Church of Christ's nationwide 11-day campaign in early November to feed the hungry and confront food-related injustice, is being expanded to include a church-wide appeal to raise more than \$111,111 to aid famine-stricken Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia.

"The devastating reports of drought and famine in East Africa have caused many of our congregations to urge that a new goal be added to Mission:1, one that specifically addresses the crisis that is taking place in Somalia," said the Rev. Geoffrey A. Black, the UCC's general minister and president.

"This is why we have decided to double our financial goals, something that is both ambitious and do-able given the enthusiasm that is building across the church for Mission:1."

The new goal comes as an addition to earlier stated goals, which include raising \$111,111 for Neighbors in Need hunger-related ministries, writing

11,111 letters to Congress in support of a more-effective U.S. foreign aid program, and collecting more than 1 million items of healthy food for local pantries across the United States. During the Nov. 1-11 timeframe, the UCC's homepage at ucc.org will be converted into an online tote board where individuals and churches can make donations, report their progress, and track the denomination's collective successes in real time.

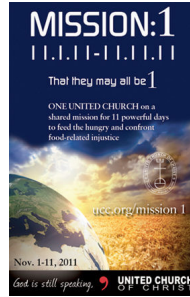
Under the new plan, all monetary gifts made to "Mission:1" during the 11-day push will be divided equally between the UCC's East Africa famine appeal and Neighbors in Need hunger-related ministries. The new goal is to raise more than \$111,111 for each.

The Rev. M. Linda Jaramillo, executive minister for the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries and a member of the denomination's five-person Collegium of Officers, said the crisis in East Africa demands a strong UCC response.

"It would be irresponsible

for our justice-minded, global-mission church to ignore the famine crisis in Africa as an essential component of what we are trying to achieve together through Mission:1," Jaramillo said. "We also want to ensure that the Neighbors in Need advocacy dollars collected during Mission:1 will address globalization policy issues as they relate to hunger everywhere."

Mission:1 is an opportunity for St. Luke's to participate in a national campaign to alleviate hunger in our nation. We are looking for ideas about how to implement this mission in our context, so please share any ideas that you may have. They could be something like collecting food, writing letters to our members of congress, our raising money to be sent to the national UCC to aid in their efforts to confront food-related injustice. Think creatively! And check out the Mission:1 page on the national UCC website: www.ucc.org/mission1/



Pastor's Message (Continued from page 3)

world. We need to find more and better ways to reach our neighbors and those in our communities with the good news of St. Luke's.

The Strategic Planning Team will work to help us better articulate our mission and vision, will do in-depth demographic studies of our community, will help us to update our web presence and find better ways to use the web and social media to tell our story and connect with others, and will help us to discern where God is calling us in the future. The Team will be made up of both Consistory members and members of the congregation. We will be relying a great deal on input from you, the members of the congregation, through surveys, open forums, and regular communication, so that you will be able to help us do this exciting work and give feedback all along the way. The Consistory and I will be working this month to put the team together, and my hope is



that we will be able to begin work in October. As soon as we have a team and a timeline in place, we will make an announcement to the congregation. Although the term "strategic planning" may sound like something out of the corporate world, it doesn't have to be—we can truly make these "holy conversations" as we listen for the presence of God among us. We ask for your prayers as we begin this exciting and challenging work, and we will be relying on your support all along the way.

This is a truly exciting time for St. Luke's, and I sense new energy in the air. I've said it before, but I will say it again—God has great things in store for St. Luke's United Church of Christ, and I believe that we are ready to embrace the future with open arms and joyful hearts. As always, it is a privilege for me to serve as your pastor, and I give thanks to God for the opportunity to be with you, to know you, and to come home each and every week.

Grace and peace,
-Pastor Trent

September Mission of the Month

Aid For Friends serves needy, isolated shut-ins, primarily the frail elderly, in the 5 county Greater Philadelphia area, with free daily home-cooked meals delivered weekly by volunteer visitors, and also to provide shut-ins with free out reach services. The goal of AFF is to help the homebound maintain their independence by supporting their determination to remain in their own homes for as long as possible and to enhance their quality of life.



is a day to enjoy great shopping, a super 25% discount shopping pass, refreshments, door prizes and the chance for you to support St. Luke's at the same time. The date is **Tuesday, October 4th**. Tickets are \$5 and all of the money will stay at St. Luke's to be used where needed.

If interested in a ticket, please see Pat Herbsleb.

Theology Pub

Our first Theology Pub was a great success, and I thank all those who came out to join in the conversation about "rethinking church." Eight members and friends gathered at Katie O'Donnell's to talk about our mission and ministry at St. Luke's, and new ways of relating to those in our community. We had some good conversation, and some great ideas were generated that I hope we will be able to build on in the future. We will gather again on the evening of **Thursday, September 22nd at 7:30 p.m.**, again at Katie O'Donnell's Irish Pub. Be on the lookout for more information as we get closer to the date, and plan to join us for another great time of fellowship and conversation. And bring



Soup Kitchen Feeding

Our next opportunity to prepare a hot delicious meal for the men and women who live on the streets is **Saturday, September 24th**. Folks are needed to make bag lunches at St. Luke's at 9 a.m., or to cook and serve the dinner at St. Mark's Church in Frankford. You are welcome to come for the whole day or just make bag lunches. It's your choice. A sign up sheet is posted on the bulletin board.

In Sympathy

We offer our deepest sympathies to the families of Kay Angerame and Rick Rossi.

Rick passed away on August 1st after a long battle with ALS. Rick was an inspiration to all of us.

Kay passed away on August 2nd. Kay, a long-time member of St. Luke's, will be greatly missed.

Our church was blessed to have had Kay and Rick as members and we shall always remember their generosity and love for their church family.



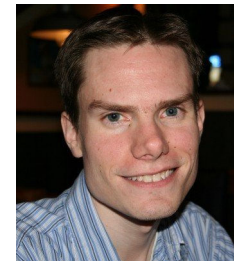
Hats for the homeless

We know it sounds a little early to be thinking about the cold of winter when the leaves have barely begun to change. But it will get cold soon and for those living on the streets a knitted hat and scarf, gloves and socks will keep them warm when the temperatures dip below freezing.

St. Luke's members and friends began knitting/crocheting hats and scarves for the homeless over twenty years ago. In that time we have given thousands of "Gifts of Warmth" to the men and women in the Frankford section of Philadelphia. This year is no exception. We will need socks, gloves, hats, and scarves to make a complete set for 100 people. We suggest you get unisex items and stay with blues, blacks and darker colors to make putting the gifts together much easier. We also will need at least 25 children's sets and 10 infant sets, again, unisex would be preferable, in addition to the adult packages. Bring your gifts to church during the month of November and early December to decorate our "Tree of Warmth".



Strategic Planning: Holy Conversations



Friends,

Recently, as I've been looking at and planning for the coming year at St. Luke's, I've been reflecting on the annual retreat that the Consistory held in June. It was a great opportunity for the leadership of St. Luke's, both Consistory members and elders, to reflect on the past year and think about the future together. We talked about our accomplishments over the previous year, where we came up short, and what we'd like to accomplish in the coming year. We also did a little dreaming together about where we might like to move as a community over the long term. I shared some learning that I've received through the UCC's Center for Progressive Renewal, and we had some wonderful time to vision together. These kinds of conversations are important in the life of a congregation, as they help us to discern who we are and who God is calling us to be in the coming years. But, these kinds of opportunities are also limiting, because we only have so much time to devote as a leadership team to thinking about the long term. The Consistory has a full agenda each month addressing the immediate needs of the congregation, and our volunteer leaders already devote a considerable amount of time and energy to keeping this great church operating. For that, I want to publicly thank them for their tireless devotion to the mission and ministry of our congregation.

Sometimes, however, we need to take the time and energy to plan and strategize for the long term. I believe that St. Luke's is at a critical juncture in its history, and we have the opportunity to lay a strong foundation for the future if we seize this moment. We've been through a great deal as a congregation in the last couple of years—the loss of a beloved pastor; an interim period; the calling of a new pastor; the welcome of new members into our community, and the loss of some long time and beloved members; wonderful worship celebrations, new life welcomed into our midst through the waters of baptism, and solemn moments of grief shared together. Through it all, we have experienced the faithfulness of God, and for that, we give thanks. And so, I believe that this is a time for us to act, to listen intently for the voice of God in our midst, and to seize this unique moment in time and chart our course for the coming years.

To that end, the Consistory and I are putting together a Strategic Planning Team that will be charged with doing the in-depth work of identifying who we are, who God is calling us to be in the future, and how we can reach more people with our message. In our conversations at the retreat, we talked about some of the attributes that characterize this congregation: we are a progressive, radically inclusive place, welcoming and accepting of all people. We are a warm and friendly community, a place that feels like home. Time and again, I have heard members give testimony to how much they felt welcomed and at home when they first walked through our doors. It's the feeling that John and I felt when we first walked in, which I've shared with you before, and one of the things that helped me to know that I was called to serve you as your pastor. This congregation is a great gift to many, a life-saver even, as some have shared. And we need to tell that story to the

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