



ST LUKE JOY CHURCH

MAY 2020 NEWSLETTER

Mother's Day May 10



Proverbs 31:16-30

26 She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. 27 She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. 28 Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: 29 "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." 30 Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

Isaiah 66:13

As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you.



John 15:13:

"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

Psalms 116:14-15

14 I shall pay my vows to the Lord,
Oh may it be in the presence of all His people.
15 Precious in the sight of the Lord
Is the death of His godly ones.

Memorial Day May 25



FROM THE DESK OF *Pastor Luke Johnston*



Getting to know our community: Glenhaven

Greetings, beloved of Christ! I want to share with you what I have been learning about our community. St. Luke Joy is situated in a neighborhood called “Glenhaven.” Glenhaven is essentially a large triangle. The boundaries run along Vivion road from Norton Avenue to I-35, then follow I-35 south back to Norton Avenue at Chouteau Park (see Map).



Within these boundaries are roughly 2,000 residents. The average age is 47 years old, and 77% of them are homeowners. The two dominant demographics are millennials (20-35) and baby-boomers (55-75). Single mothers run many of the young families with an average of two kids. Within Glenhaven alone, ethnicity is vast. Caucasian (88%), African American (4%), Hispanic (6%), American Indian (0.5%), Asian (3%), native Hawaiian (.01%), Middle Eastern (3%), and Indian (1%)! According to the NEXTDOOR app, their favorite bakery is Donut King. Their favorite dinner/lunch restaurant is Stroud’s, followed by Corner Café for breakfast. The most commonly visited bar is The Firehouse on 20th.

Getting to know our community: Glenhaven

Within Glenhaven is Penguin Park and only one other church (Beth Haven). If every person in Glenhaven came to church, there would not be enough churches in a 5-mile radius to hold them.

Let me tell you about some personal interactions I have had with Glenhaven residents. I am using different names for the sake of their privacy.

I met Susan Smith when she called the church in need of food. She is a single mother with three small kids. She is working several jobs to get food on the table. She lives in Glenhaven. Kimberlee Jones is another mother who I met in the same situation. She told me she could not come to our church because she was not "Catholic." She thought the "St. Luke" meant we were a Catholic parish. She lives in Glenhaven. Kim Garcia came into the church in need of gas to get to work. Her husband was recently taken to prison. They have three small kids. She lives in Glenhaven. She is worried about coming to church because people may find out about her husband.

Ben and Jane are an elderly couple that both lost their jobs. Jane has cancer, and Ben has been hopping job to job to pay medical bills. They needed food for that day. They live in Glenhaven.

Stacey Olsen came to the church looking for food and toilet paper. She is a young mom with two teenage kids. She lost her job and is on unemployment. She told me directly that she is scared to come into church for fear of judgment. She only knows "Presbyterian" as "The white church." She lives in Glenhaven. Sheryl Robinson came to the church desperate for size four diapers, and 4T Pulls ups. She is a grandmother raising two infant grandchildren. She is unemployed. She lives in Glenhaven. Carol McDonald called the office looking for milk, formula, and size one diapers. She is a single mother with babies. She was afraid to walk in the front door for fear that "she would be struck by lightning coming in a church."

Robert Ferguson came to one of our church events but almost didn't come in because he thought "Presbyterian" was a different religion. He lives in Glenhaven. These are all real people, children of God who have difficult situations. Their perception of our church may or may not be valid. The fact is, this is how people in our community think. When you look at "Glenhaven," do you see these people? We need to be asking ourselves, "What can we do to reach these people?" "What boundaries do we have that may be keeping them from coming in or reaching out?"

Getting to know our community: Glenhaven

Our address is not an accident. God has us planted in this neighborhood for a reason. We are to be a light on a hill! Glenhaven is not the only neighborhood we should be ministering too, but it is the first! We must grow where we are planted. There is work to do! We have to reform ourselves to meet the current task in front of us. Glenhaven will likely change again in 20 years, and we will need to adapt again. As the Apostle Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 9: 22-23, "To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

"Will you pray for Glenhaven? I encourage you to drive through the community. Prayer walk the streets. Get to know the people. This is our orchid. God has called us to the harvest. God bless you! I hope to see you soon.

Fear no darkness!

-Pastor Luke

The Long Night of Passover

Written by: Ted Horowitz

As Passover and Holy Week came this year, there were no large gatherings of multiple families and congregations such as we have enjoyed for many years. Instead, individuals and single families huddled at home in fear of the disease around them. I was reminded of our ancestors, the ancient Israelites, huddled at home in fear while the Angel of Death passed over them and struck their neighbors.

The Angel of Death spared those who were marked by the blood of a lamb. Today, the blood of the Lamb protects us from eternal death. But we fear this new disease that doesn't discriminate between good and bad, guilty and innocent.

In God's eyes, however, none of us is innocent. As citizens under government of, by and for the people, we share the collective guilt of our nation. Throughout history, most populations unfairly suffered because of the actions of their leaders. We Americans have been uniquely able to elect our own and influence their decisions. Therefore, we are even more responsible.

My initial response to each national disaster of the last 40 years has been to view it as divine judgement for our national policy of legalized abortion. Whatever your opinion may be, God's opinion in Scripture is clear. He judges nations. He punished Canaan, Carthage, Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan and the USSR because they slaughtered the innocent. Why should we expect less? We need to confess our national sin, work for national repentance and pray for God's mercy.

Art In The Park

By Donna Shetler

The following pages are for the Art in The Park program, I hope you enjoy them and participate in this wonderful outreach program. Contact me with any questions.



ART IN THE PARK

An outreach ministry of
Saint Luke Joy Church

VISION ART IN THE PARK

We are *trusting God* to help us reach our community through an outreach event at Penguin Park.

We are *praying for guidance* as we prepare fun arts and crafts activities for children ages Preschool through 5th Grade.

We will be a *consistent presence* at Penguin Park this summer. Our event will run every Wednesday from August 19 through September 30, 2020.

We *believe* the members of the church will surround us with prayer and provide the resources we need to accomplish this outreach event.

We *praise God, in advance*, for the joy He will bring to the children and their families who visit Penguin Park during our event.



ART IN THE PARK SCHEDULE

We are planning a summer of outreach at Penguin Park

All dates are on Wednesday

Grades K-5 Art will be August 19, 26, September 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30

6:00 – 7:30 pm

Preschool Art will be September 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30

11:00 am – 12:00 noon

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Thanks for asking!

- There are tasks to do that help us prepare for each week's project. You can pick them up at the church office. Let us know you want to help, and we will have materials in a bag with your name on it.
- We estimate ministry to around 400 children. Your monetary donations will be greatly appreciated.
- Pray for the preparations that include the work to get ready and the young hearts we will minister to.
- Sign up and attend one of the Art-in-the-Park training sessions planned for May 20, 2020.



I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING

What about the coronavirus?

The entrances to Penguin Park are presently barricaded by KC Park & Rec trucks.

All the playground equipment is wrapped in caution tape.

This is where prayer comes in.

Regardless of what the future looks like now, we are planning to be ready for this exciting opportunity.

Then people **everywhere** will know about the Glory of the Lord.

Habakkuk 2:14



Contact me to sign up for the 1:1
May 20 training!!!

saintlukejoyoutreach@gmail.com

Donna Shetler, Director
Outreach & Children's Ministry

MAY 20 TRAINING FOR ART-IN-THE-PARK VOLUNTEERS

Due to the coronavirus and to respect social distancing, we will have appointments available from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm and 6:00 – 8:00 pm so that people can sign up for one-on-one personal training about Art-in-the-Park.

Our agenda looks like this:

- Understanding how the church is a bridge out of poverty
- Missouri's "left alone" policies about children
- Overview of all the art and craft projects
- How a "kid encourager" and "behind-the-scenes prepper" are the backbones of this event

Donna Shetler – Director of Children’s Ministry and Outreach

Written by: Janice Stewart, Elder

Donna began working with us in February, 2020. Her position is truly novel for St. Luke Joy. We have had youth directors before but never a staff member dedicated to children’s ministry and outreach. The idea of this change was presented to the Child and Youth Ministry Team by Pastor Luke in November, 2019. He made a compelling case that our focus should be on revitalizing our church by focusing on rebuilding our children’s program. Specifically, focusing on reaching out to children and their families. Our team agreed. A job description was developed by the Personnel and Placement Team and approved by Child and Youth. It was subsequently submitted to and approved by Session. Advertising began in December. When Donna applied, we were all impressed by her experience and background. During her interview process our admiration increased. She was what a hiring manager in any field dreams of: prepared, asking questions, sharing inciteful answers to questions asked, and offering suggestions for improvements even before an offer of employment. It was easy for all involved, including Session, to approve her hire.

Unfortunately, shortly after she began her position here Covid-19 attacked the world and has kept us socially distanced. This has certainly prevented us from getting to know Donna well, appreciating her kind manner, her ability to accomplish much in short periods of time, and her tenaciousness in dealing with potential partners in her endeavors for St. Luke Joy. I would like to share with you a portion of what she has accomplished in 3 short months.

Outreach

Donna has planned and is ready to launch Art in the Park. To accomplish this there was significant preparatory work. She met with our contact for Penguin Park and was able to negotiate a partnership with the park that will allow us to use the Pavilion at no cost. She spoke with Mid-Continent Library to partner with them for this event as well. In addition, she applied for grants to cover funding needed for supplies and snacks. Next came specific planning which included selecting the art projects, determining age levels for the projects, planning the logistics of the events including how many participants we could accommodate in a group, how many volunteers would be needed, what should the schedule be, creating examples of each project, putting together boxes for each project with everything volunteers need to complete the project, and preparing for one on one training sessions for the volunteers. You can see the results of all this work in her article elsewhere in this newsletter.

Donna Shetler – Director of Children’s Ministry and Outreach Continued

Nursery

First, she assessed the current status of the nursery including staffing, equipment and supplies, cleanliness, and safety. Then she went to work. Some of the results of this assessment were the following.

- She worked with Pastor Luke and Pat Schoenrade from Personnel and Placement Team to upgrade the nursery position to a Nursery Coordinator position which increased the responsibilities of that position, and also led to updating policies for the nursery. New responsibilities include preparing and teaching a simple lesson to the toddlers, scheduling volunteers to assist, enforcing admittance limitations to the nursery, regular sanitation of equipment and toys in the nursery.
- She has identified the need for new furniture in the nursery and for updates that need to be made to the area. We are working with Building and Grounds to accomplish these tasks.
- She is planning training for volunteers.
- She is setting up a sign in and out system for the infants and toddlers.

Kindergarten and Elementary

- She has spent time getting to know the class volunteer teachers and to evaluate the curriculum.
- A new curriculum is being seriously considered. It is called Orange. Donna contacted this company and acquired one month of their curriculum at no cost for members of the Child and Youth Team as well as the teacher to evaluate. She also determined that this company offers services to Churches that are re-planting and part of those services is 6 months of free curriculum.

Child Protection

- Donna has updated the Child Protection Policy.
- She researched and evaluated the best method of obtaining background checks for staff and volunteers.
- She is rolling out a modified training program and background check program to meet the needs of covid-19 social distancing requirements.

From this, it is my hope that each of you will not only realize the extent and speed of Donna’s accomplishments, but also the level of commitment and value she is showing our church. In my mind and heart, she surely exemplifies Isaiah 40:31 “But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” Donna is “soaring” for the Lord and for us. I pray that when we can get back together, you will take the time to get to know her and to help her in her mission to grow and nurture our children’s ministry and outreach program.

Report of the Session Meeting

Written by: Clerk of Session, Debbie Blackman

As we have shared in our recent correspondence, the elders are committed to better communication of the work we are doing in the replanting efforts of this church. The Session met via Zoom on the evening of April 27, 2020, and this is a summary of what was discussed. The minutes of all meetings are kept in the office, and members are welcome to request a copy at any time. Continued prayers are needed for the leadership of the church as we endeavor to follow God's plan.

- The bids for renovation of the education wing, main entrance, hallway, and nursery that had been presented to the Buildings and Grounds committee were shared and approved by Session.
- It was unanimously decided that the church would pursue applying for the EPC Revitalization grant, which provides matching funds up to \$10,000.00 for churches undergoing the revitalization process. This could help lower costs for us as we proceed with the renovations and preparations for replanting the church.
- The church has applied for paycheck protection program grant funds through the CARES act and is awaiting response, thanks to much work by Treasurer Bill Stewart and Selina Garcia. The church has continued to pay all employees through this stay at home period, and these funds will help meet expenses in this time of reduced income.
- The Elders heard a report from Director of Children's Ministry Donna Shetler on the work that has been done in planning for the Arts in the Park program. Dates for this program are dependent on the reopening plans for the city and the parks department. A volunteer training is being planned for May 20. Child protection training and background checking is being planned soon for nursery volunteers, and will occur in the near future for other volunteers with children and youth. We also heard of ways the Education committee and Donna have stayed in contact with our children, and reached out to the community.
- It was decided that church services should remain with the current drive-up and live streaming options for the safety of members, with a possible reopening in early June. Office staff will continue to work from home, and office hours will still be Monday and Thursday afternoon. The Session will review Clay County statistics and recommendations of health professionals in mid-May to determine the dates and procedures for reopening safely.

Report of the Session Meeting...Continued

- A Congregational meeting needs to be planned for election of a Nominating Committee, but it was determined that scheduling such a meeting will probably need to wait until summer with the present restrictions for gathering. The Session and Board of Deacons will determine their representatives to this committee in the next two months, and the congregation is asked to prayerfully consider and propose at-large committee nominees. Members who are interested in serving are invited to contact Clerk of Session Debbie Blackman. If members have someone in mind to nominate, those persons should be contacted regarding their willingness to serve before being placed in nomination.
- Janice Stewart and Debbie Blackman volunteered to chair a task force to honor the rich past and history of this church. Members of the congregation who would like to be part of these efforts are asked to contact Janice or Debbie.
- The financial reports of the church and the impact of the effects of the current economic response to Covid19 were reviewed. Cost-saving measures and appreciation for the continued support of the congregation were discussed.
- Pastor Luke shared the efforts for outreach to the neighborhood in this difficult time. Pamphlets were handed out by Melissa Gould and himself, and information was shared via social media to let our community know of worship opportunities and our willingness to help. Our congregation has been generous, and it was shared that any resources not utilized by requests will be donated to local food pantries.
- The St. Luke Joy Missions Fund, administered by Tom Rule, had dividends which Praise God were not impacted by the current economic downturns. It was decided by the Missions and Outreach team that these funds will be distributed to Kurt and Ruth Bubalo, Rachel and Gary Cheney of All God's Children, the Murundu Mission Hospital of Hope, Child Fund International, Rachel House, and Shepherd's Center of the Northland. It will also allow funding of outreach programs for Art in the Park, Golden Oaks School, and other community outreach. The Session approved this plan for distribution of funds.

Deacons Corner

Thank you

Written by: Brenda Hunnicutt

The deacons would like to thank everyone who contributed, and are still contributing, items for our community care packages. Special kudos to Pastor Luke and Jamie for all of their help in making this happen.

MAY PRAYER FOCUS

Written by: Melissa Gould

Do you think a lot more people are praying to God in May 2020 because of the current global pandemic? A common saying nowadays is “send (or think) good thoughts” in lieu of “pray.” I wonder if people are asking for the “send good thoughts” kind of asking or if they are shaken up enough to the more seriously praying, “Lord, save us, heal my loved one, hear our cry for help. I’m drowning. Please.” Prayer matters to God. Our Lord Jesus prayed to His Father, humbly submitting to His divine will. He prayed for those God gave to him. Jesus intercedes for us even right now before the Father.

Your prayers are precious to God. Prayer is so important that Jesus taught very clearly about it. Prayers builds up the person who prays and also the one(s) prayed for. Prayer sustains us through our many struggles and sufferings. Prayer gives us confidence and hope. Prayer unifies the body of believers. As we persevere in praying for our St. Luke leaders this month, be encouraged in the certainty that God hears every prayer, each one matters and His purpose in and through our prayers will bear eternal fruit.

In May please pray especially for **Elder Darlene Lewis, Deacon Dennis Bailey and Choir Director Ted Horowitz**. Pray each one draws near to God as they serve our congregation. Pray that each one listens as God speaks to them and reveals Himself to them in Bible study and personal prayer time. Pray for deep and lasting transformation as God shapes them into the man/woman He intends. More than anything- allow God’s Holy Spirit to move in your heart to pray in whatever way He leads you to pray. Communicate with these friends and servants of God how much you appreciate them.



Happy
BIRTHDAY

01 - Phyllis Karpierz
04 - Jennifer Reyes
05 - Travis Erickson
06 - Gavin Quinn
07 - Martha Morningstar
09 - Karen Minnick
14 - David Horowitz
14 - Barbara Kelly
16 - Pam Pelzman
17 - Hunter Gould
19 - Emily Vandeginste
21 - Joe Pallikkathayil
22 - Maya Hubbard
24 - Kerry Gould
31 - Jamie Johnston



Happy
ANNIVERSARY

13 - Luke & Jamie Johnston
21 - Ken & Karen Minnick
26 - John & Betty Hoagland
30 - David & Martha Morningstar
30 - Beth & Gary Burns
31 - John & Cass Sullivan

Announcements & Reminders

May 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31 - Every Sunday at 10:30 am - Drive In Church

May 6, 13, 20 & 27 - Every Wednesday at 6:00pm - Zoom Open Table Bible Study

May 7 - National Day of Prayer

May 10 - Mother's Day

May 25 - Memorial Day/Office Closed