

JOYFUL JOURNAL

ST LUKE JOY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

"WHETHER
IT BE
THROUGH
PRAYERS OR
BIBLE
STUDIES, IT'S
IMPORTANT
TO SPEND
TIME WITH
CHRIST
EACH DAY."

Colossians 3:15-17

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.



Coming Back to Worship

Article Submitted by Pastor Luke Johnston

From fellow EPC pastor: Coming Back to Worship

When will you come back to worship?

Some of you are back already. Some are waiting for a vaccine. Some will not come back unless masks are required. Some will not come back until Covid-19 has ended completely.

When will you come back to worship? As your pastor, I can't make that decision for you. It depends on your age, health and personal level of safety and caution. If you are live-streaming worship that is okay – you shouldn't feel guilty about it.

However, my real concern is that some people may not come back at all. In general, if people are out of the church for a long time, they don't come back. After six months, the "habit" of worship begins to fade. People feel disconnected and disengaged. In the wake of Covid-19, many experts predict a long-term shift in church attendance.

I am extremely grateful that our church has been able to live-stream worship. In many ways, it has helped us to stay connected with the LORD and with each other. I hear this especially from our homebound members. For all of us, the livestreaming technology has been a lifeline and a blessing. The danger, however, is that technology will take the place of live worship. If I can worship in the comfort of my own home, why bother going to church? If I can get the same content on my tablet or television, isn't that more efficient and convenient?

For many people, digital church is no different than working remotely or shopping online.

However, the church is the family of God. Worship is more than just content or a convenience – it is something we do together. At the heart of worship is our love for God and for each other. There are many things we can do remotely, but love is not one of them!

Imagine if I said to my wife, "Beth, instead of going on a date with you, we will connect on Zoom!" If I said that to Beth, she would begin to doubt my love for her. Why? Because if you love someone, you want to see and be with them. A Zoom call doesn't cut it. Right now, we are missing each other, and that is a good thing. If we stop missing each other, it means our love for God and for each other is growing cold. If we love each other, we long to be together.

When will you come back to worship? It may be weeks or months. In the meantime, I pray that technology will not take the place of relationships. Your servant in Christ, Peter.

Report to Session

By Clerk of Session, Debbie Blackman

Report to the Congregation for Session Meeting October 26, 2020

Due to possible slick road conditions, the Session met via Zoom at 7:00pm. All members were present.

Pastor Luke opened the meeting with prayer. The group discussed their reading of chapter 2 of Experiencing God focusing on how God works according to His nature.

The minutes of the September meeting were reviewed and approved.

The group reviewed the congregational meeting and discussed how the amended by-laws would be sent to the Presbytery, IRS, and other necessary parties, and how the name change would be handled with the bank. Revised copies of the by-laws will be set out in the church for availability to members, and they may also ask for a printed copy from the office. It was felt it was a productive meeting, with members honestly expressing their opinions and presenting good questions. Two more Town Halls are scheduled in November and December for continued dialogue and communication. Organization of committees was discussed and Elders will be praying and brainstorming about how teams might be restructured.

The next plans for the replanting process were discussed. Pastor Luke shared about interest from Colonial Church in helping with the replant, as well as others from the community. Several Elders have also been in discussion with interested parties who might work alongside us. A spreadsheet of necessary tasks was developed by Kim Smedley and Pastor Luke, and the Elders will be reviewing and noting tasks for which they and their committees would be responsible.

Clerk of Session Debbie Blackman shared that minutes of the Congregational Meeting were shared with the congregation via the newsletter and placed in the official file.

Ministry team reports were made as follows:

Pastor Luke is working with Deacons to organize a smooth transition for the Hospitality Team.

Elder Al Steed reported that the adult classes and small groups are going well, and some new people are participating. It is hoped that more members will be encouraged to participate once concerns about the virus are eased.

Report of Session – Continued

Ways to make studies accessible to others who cannot attend in person were discussed. Those participating are finding the studies very beneficial. Elder Janice Stewart reported that a drive-thru Halloween treat event will take place on October 31 from 5–8pm where bags of candy, a game, coloring sheets, and church information will be distributed. Volunteers are needed.

Pastor Luke said the Outreach and Missions team will be meeting next week, and shared a document with this team's goals and ideas for reaching out to our GlenHaven neighborhood.

Elder Pat Schoenrade of the Personnel and Placement committee shared two job descriptions for positions the team feels will have a huge impact on our replanting and mission efforts. One would be a part-time Children's Ministry Director. This person would work about 25 hours a week, organizing and overseeing Sunday School and children's activities and helping to grow our children's ministry. This would help fill the vacancy following Donna Shetler's vacancy. The other would be a full-time Community Outreach Director. This person would be someone with experience and skills in missions and outreach work who would work with Pastor Luke to develop community ministries, assist the leadership team in the replant process, and encourage members and others in fulfilling the church's mission and vision. After discussion about the potential costs but also the many benefits to the health and growth of the church, the Session approved seeking candidates for these two positions.

Elder Don Smith reported that the bathrooms in the education wing have been fixed, and that the resurfacing of the parking lots has been postponed until spring to allow for better weather conditions for this process.

Elder Kim Smedley reviewed the financials for September and discussed the 2021 budget. Teams were given information from their 2020 budgets and will be working on developing their new budgets in the next two weeks so a vote can occur in November.

Elder Debbie Blackman shared that the Worship Committee will be meeting in the next couple of weeks to organize worship teams now that we are inside, and to plan for safe services for Advent and Christmas. Ongoing safety measures were discussed as well.

The meeting was closed in prayer by Pat Schoenrade.

Deacons Report By Brenda Hunnicutt

This month your contributions to the Deacon's fund helped with utilities for a local family with a child that has severe asthma. A local man that needed rent assistance and a Golden Oaks family that needed food assistance.

Pastor Luke and I met with the principal and therapist at Golden Oaks to talk about what our church will be able to do for the rest of the school year. Thanks for your caring.



Decorating For Christmas

Decorating for Christmas!

It has been a challenging year. Maybe more than ever, we need to experience the beauty and joy of this important season in the life of His church!

We will be decorating and preparing the church for Advent and the celebration of Christmas on Saturday, November 28 beginning at 10:00am.

The more hands we have, the easier the task and the more fun it will be!

Debbie Blackman. 816-225-3529

Rachel House Christmas Drive

This year instead of Operation Christmas Child our outreach committee has decided to help support Rachel House and our local mothers. Rachel house is in need of "New Mom Care Packages" and "Dad Bags." What does this look like?

New Mom Care Package: Pick a tote for a young woman and fill it with these items. \$5 QT gift card, cute water bottle, nail polish, pampering beauty products, a personal letter of encouragement and a pocket New Testament!

Dad Bag: Fill a backpack/diaper bag with 1 of each of the following: Blanket, pacifier, sleeper, onesie, baby wash, baby lotion, diaper cream, toy, baby bottle, package of Diapers (size 2), package of wipes. Also a personal letter and pocket New Testament.

You can put together a basket or just donate some items and we will assemble them for you! Bring your gifts to the church prior to December 20. This is a great and easy way to bless our local (soon to be) parents!"

Advent Devotionals

By: Melissa Ball

It's that time of year again to prayerfully consider writing an Advent devotional. This year, the week to have devotions turned in is the week of November 11 since Advent starts on November 29 this year.

The latest I will accept completed articles is Sunday, November 22.

Feel free to write on something partially or totally different than what I've got suggested because, for me, these Advent devotions aren't about how well you write or whether you have something important to say but about sharing something from your heart. If you have difficulty writing something but know of a poem or short devotion that means something to you that you would like to share, those submissions will be accepted as well. So please keep that in mind as you prayerfully consider signing up for one. Since there are 27 days available to write for, I would like to get 26 people or less besides myself to submit one or two devotionals. Thanking everyone in advance, Melissa Ball

Golden Oaks Christmas

By: Brenda Hunnicutt

Christmas ideas for the kids and teachers at Golden Oaks School. We will again be providing toys and small gift cards to our adopted school, Golden Oaks, for Christmas. As you are shopping, please pick up a few things for our school. Listed below are the items the teachers have told us the kids would like:

- Hot wheels
- Anything that lights up or makes noise (for our Autistic students)
- Drawing or coloring items
- Cool erasers
- Small stuffed animals
- \$5 gift cards (Quick Trip, Starbucks, Scooter's Coffee)

There will be a container marked "Golden Oaks" for your items in the Fellowship Hall.

Thank you congregation!



OPERATION SHOEBOX & TROOP 1677

OPERATION SHOEBOX is in season. This year St. Luke Joy is sponsoring a local organization (Rachel House). However, Girl Scout Troop 1677 spent a weekend working hard to fill shoeboxes. They included a hand written note in each box. The Girl Scouts have asked the congregation to pray over their boxes as they will be delivering them to their destination stop sometime next week.

So far Troop 1677 has packed 89 boxes! Trisha Hart, (girl scout leader) has shared pictures of their service in action.





6 Jan Wiley
9 Gerald Strasburg
17 Becky Reyes
19 Alice Staves
20 Jo Dillingham
27 John Brown
28 Isaiah Hughes
30 Benjamin Horowitz

18 Bob & Kathy Haywood
27 Tom & Beulah Rule

Special Events

3 Vote - Election Day
7 Boy Scout - Merit Badge Class
8 TownHall - Virtual
11 Advent Devotionals Due to Melissa Ball
15 Deacons Meeting
21 Boy Scout Merit Badge Class
23 Session Meeting
26 Thanksgiving - Church Office Closed
28 Church Christmas Decorating

COMING IN NOVEMBER

01 SUNDAY

9:00 Bible Study
10:30 Worship
3:00 Girl Scouts 1677

02 MONDAY

8:00 Classical Conversations
6:00 Boy Scout COH

03 TUESDAY

VOTE!
7:00 Men's Bible Study
7:00 CA Group

04 WEDNESDAY

Noon Prayer Group
6:30 Open Table & Zoom
7:00 CA Group

05 THURSDAY

6:00 Girl Scout 972

06 FRIDAY

7:00 CA Group

07 SATURDAY

10-12 Boy Scout Merit Badge
9:00pm CA Group

08 SUNDAY

9:00 Bible Study
10:30 Worship
3:00 Girl Scouts 1677
4:00 TownHall-Virtual

09 MONDAY

8:00 Classical Conversations
6:00 Boy & Cub Scout
7:00 Ministry Teams

10 TUESDAY

7:00 Men's Bible Study
7:00 CA Group

11 WEDNESDAY

Noon Prayer Group
6:30 Open Table & Zoom
7:00 CA Group

12 THURSDAY

6:00 Girl Scout 972

13 FRIDAY

7:00 CA Group

14 SATURDAY

9:00pm CA Group

15 SUNDAY

9:00 Bible Study
10:30 Worship
Noon Deacons
3:00 Girl Scouts 1677

16 MONDAY

8:00 Classical Conversations
6:00 Boy & Cub Scout

17 TUESDAY

7:00 Men's Bible Study
7:00 CA Group

18 WEDNESDAY

Noon Prayer Group
6:30 Open Table & Zoom
7:00 CA Group

19 THURSDAY

6:00 Girl Scout 972

20 FRIDAY

7:00 CA Group

21 SATURDAY

9:00-4 Boy Scout Merit Badge
9:00pm CA Group

22 SUNDAY

9:00 Bible Study
10:30 Worship
3:00 Girl Scouts 1677

23 MONDAY

6:00 Boy & Cub Scouts
7:00 Session

24 TUESDAY

7:00 Men's Bible Study
7:00 CA Group

25 WEDNESDAY

Noon Prayer Group
6:30 Open Table & Zoom
7:00 CA Group

26 THURSDAY

Closed Thanksgiving

27 FRIDAY

7:00 CA Group

28 SATURDAY

10:00 Christmas Decorating
9:00pm CA Group

29 SUNDAY

9:00 Bible Study
10:30 Worship
3:00 Girl Scouts 1677

30 MONDAY

6:00 Boy & Cub Scout