

# THE EPISTLE

The Monthly Newsletter of St. Luke's United Methodist Church

## Networking: I Will Make You Fishers of People

Gowganda is a small village with a population of 67 in the Province of Ontario Canada. It is the nearest metropolis to the location the Neenan's have traveled for 60 years for camping, fishing, and to gather with friends made over all the years. Upon leaving the city limits there is no network to stay in touch with the world or family. On the other hand, there is lot of network in regard to some fabulous fishing.

One of the unspoken rules of fishing is that when one has a strike everyone in the boat reels their lines in and the nearest to the net prepares to land the fish. Whoever else is on board watches with delight the fight between fish and human.

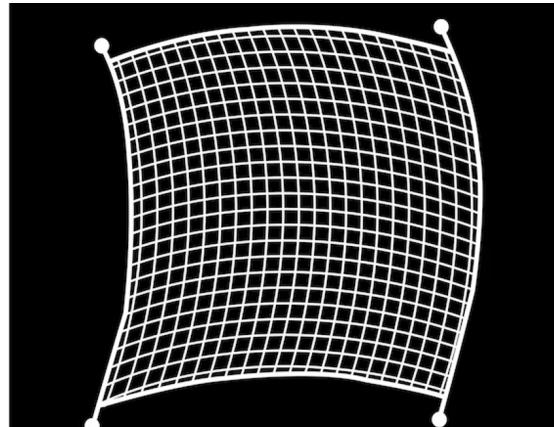
The story is well known in the Gospel of Matthew 4:18-19 about four fishermen named Andrew, Peter, James, and John. They lay aside their fishing nets and accepted an invitation of Jesus to follow him to be "fishers of people." At the time, whether or not known to them, they were exchanging one kind of network for another kind of Net Work. It is the fulfillment of a prophesy written in the Book of Jeremiah 16:16a which reads "I am now sending for many fishermen says the Lord, and they will catch them".

When word got out in the village (and it did very quickly) that these 4 abruptly left their trade to fish for people, all were aghast. To catch fish with a net (technically a deceptive activity) was one thing and quite acceptable but fishing for people was quite another matter. It was interpreted by religious authorities and those under their jurisdiction who took their word hook, line, and sinker as drawing in people for selfish reasons in deceitful ways for their cause. John and James leaving their father in middle of mending their nets was bad enough but to "fish for people" was way beyond

the limit. As a side note, Jesus later shares the hypocrisy of this teaching religious authorities promoted when he states "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross land and sea to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of Gehenna (Hell) as yourselves", Matthew 23:15. This is one of the first examples of Jesus taking a world view and radically rearranging the construct of its messaging. Much like The Cross which went from a worldly symbol of suffering and shame to a symbol of What Wondrous Love This Is O My Soul, this new Net Work came to be seen as fishers of people to set them free into the life of The Kingdom of God from death. Luke in 5:1-11 aptly calls the fishing a Great Catch. It was the start of many Sunday schools.

Networking since that day of the Lord's first catch on the Sea of Galilee continues to be the Church universal sacred responsibility. In next month's Epistle article, the focus will continue to be on Networking. The focus will be on various historical network practices within the Body of Christ with an invitation for us at St. Luke's to have a Summer Adventure church family project to study, celebrate, and share ways to strengthen our Networking.

Pastor Dennis Neenan





# ST. LUKE'S AT THE REDBIRDS GAME!

## Save the Date!

St. Luke's UMC is invited to go out to the Redbirds game on June 1st, 2024 at 6:30p, fireworks to follow after! \$18 a ticket. Please contact the business office to purchase your tickets.



## Day School News

Our Basket Raffle was a huge success! Laura Rabb and her team worked to get amazing donations to make the morning so much fun! Funds raised will help teachers with needed unbudgeted items. Parents and grandparents also enjoyed muffins, donuts and granola to say thank you for being a part of our Day School family.

### Jeremiah's Italian Ice Night!

All are invited to Jeremiah's Italian Ice on Summer Avenue, Thursday, April 4. A percentage of the profits will be donated to our Day School. We'll enjoy fellowship, have great treats and make a little money while having fun! Join us!



SMORGASBORD PRESENTS

# PUTTING ON THE RITZ

Come enjoy our community wide talent show benefitting our Youth Summer programs including Appalachia Service Project. We'll enjoy a spaghetti lunch with desserts donated by our wonderful St. Luke's cooks, followed by a show you will not want to miss for \$10 per person with a family maximum of \$30.

We are signing up performers of all types and ages NOW! Acts may be serious or funny. We welcome musicians, comedians, skits, dancers, singers, magicians. Groups and individual performers are included and both the talented, and of course, the not so talented are welcome!

Text or call Lynne McAlexander at 550-3091 no later than April 11th. Plan now to be a part of the FUN!

# April 21 | 11:30am

# Women's Spring Retreat

The Deborah Discipleship Band will be hosting a Women's Spring Retreat on Saturday, April 6 from 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at the home of Amy Pearson. The noise in our lives can often get in the way of hearing, seeing and simply being with God. As nature will be waking up and new life sprouting around us, this will provide intentional space for silence and listening, contemplation, and sharing - with the hope of hearing what new life might be bubbling up within ourselves.

Space is limited and registration is required. There is no cost for this retreat. To register, *please email Denise Hensley at [thehensleys421@gmail.com](mailto:thehensleys421@gmail.com).* **Registration deadline is March 30, but we still have a few openings.**

Breakfast and snacks will be provided. Bring a notebook and pen. Wear comfortable clothes. Walking will be offered for those interested. All are welcome to meet for lunch at the General Store after the retreat.

## YOUNG PARENT SUNDAY SCHOOL HOSTING ENNEAGRAM STUDY! ALL ARE WELCOME!

The Enneagram is a unique tool for deepening self-awareness. Unlike other personality tests that focus more on behavior, the Enneagram takes a deeper dive into motivation behind the behavior – where we place our attention and what we most avoid. It can be a map for personal and spiritual growth because it indicates the autonomic patterns of our ego structure thus gets to the core of who we are.

Join us for this 4-week series on the Enneagram. While it will be helpful to know your type, it will not be required as this will be more of an introduction to the Enneagram.

The class will be taught by our own Denise Hensley, certified Spiritual Director through The Haden Institute, and trained in the Enneagram.

The class will meet in the church library, 9- 10 a.m., April 7, 14, 21 and 28.

# Children's Ministry

Thank you so much Church Family for all of your donations and support of our Easter Egg Hunt! We may have had our best year yet with the Fellowship Hall being full of families, around 80 people total and about 50 kids! It was a great turn out and the children had so much fun. They made crafts, did a cake walk, got their faces painted, and enjoyed an awesome hunt. All the joy that day was made possible thanks to your donations and the very best volunteers! I hope you got a chance to check out the flowers they made on the cross that brightens up the Hospitality Hall for the special Easter Season.

As we end the Lenten Season, we prepare ourselves for our next big children's event, Vacation Bible School! VBS is fast approaching, with the dates being June 10-13. Registration is already available online and we are still seeking volunteers! The theme this year is "Hometown Nazareth." You can help prior to the week-of, do behind the scenes work, lead a group, lead a craft, or even help with food. If you are interested at all in being a part of Vacation Bible School this year, please do not hesitate to contact me. We can find a place for everyone! And if you have kids or grandkids, make sure you go ahead and sign them up so no one misses the fun!



Everyone's Invited to a Reception  
In Honor of Our Recent New Members

Sunday, April 7, 2024

Join us after worship in Hospitality Hall, after worship for this opportunity to meet those who have recently joined the church. We'll enjoy cookies, coffee, lemonade, and a chance for fellowship.

#### MARCH 2024 HONORIUMS AND MEMORIALS:

##### Honoriums:

**In Honor of Allan Hensley from Janie Hendrix**

##### Memorials:

**In Memory of Alice Roberts from Sue Gray, Jean Roberts**

**In Memory of James Delgadillo from Board of Governors and Staff of Community Foundation of Greater Memphis**

**In Memory of Candy Williams from Pam Holland**

**In Memory of Milton and Lorraine Anderson from Linda Milbradt**

**In Memory of Rex Smith from Rita Richardson**



The Fun Bunch will be going to the Memphis Botanical Gardens April 24th at 11a. Everyone who is attending is to meet in the main building lobby. A group of seven at a time will tour the gardens on the tram (takes about 20 to 30 minutes). If you have a membership to the gardens, please use it for your admittance to the gardens and if you don't have a membership, a kind person is paying for your visit to the gardens! Lunch will be on each person in Fratelli's Café. For more information, please see the sign-up form at the front desk.

Is your 7th-10th grader looking for a summer gig? St. Luke's Challengers Summer Camp is looking for Junior Counselors to assist us this summer. Tasks include games and craft set up, snack preparation, taking photos and helping us document our time together and field trip help. This is a wonderful opportunity for community service hours in a fun, fast-paced environment. Please contact Sheridan Harris-Challengers Director for more information.



Calling all rising seventh  
graders and up!!

DID YOU KNOW YOU  
CAN BE A JR.  
COUNSELOR FOR  
SUMMER CAMP???

This is a great way for  
you to get community  
service hours!

Please fill out the form below:  
[https://schools.mybrightwheel.com/sign-in?redirect\\_path=forms/2394bddc-9e5c-4636-8357-5b98610aba38/self-service](https://schools.mybrightwheel.com/sign-in?redirect_path=forms/2394bddc-9e5c-4636-8357-5b98610aba38/self-service)