



The people of The United Methodist Church

# E-MESSENGER

Open hearts  
Open minds  
Open doors

Saint Luke United Methodist Church

Volume 2022, No. 1

Wednesday, January 5, 2022

Available at: [www.st-luke-umc.net](http://www.st-luke-umc.net)



## Agree to Disagree

There are many denominations in every city, and in these churches you can be sure that Christians will disagree on some issues. Some issues are considered Primary and others Secondary issues.

Have you ever gotten into a debate about social, theological or a religious issue with someone? So, how are Christians supposed to agree to disagree? During my seminary years, I learned about two great church leaders in the 1700's George Whitefield and John Wesley. They were close friends as students at Oxford. They were great preachers influencing so many to accept and believe in Jesus Christ. Eventually, their friendship and partnership were strained over the issue of predestination or election. John Wesley called it a "monstrous doctrine" and wrote a pamphlet to discredit Whitefield's belief and teaching on the issue. They attempted to work things out but things only got more heated. *Wesley become more firm in his convictions concerning Arminianism (key principles of Arminian theology include general atonement, free-will, resistible grace, and present assurance for salvation) and Whitefield become more firm in his convictions concerning Calvinism (key principles of this belief system, are "total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and perseverance of salvation. (TULIP).*

As it appeared that the relationship was so strained there could be no remedy, one of Whitefield's followers asked him, ***Do you think that when we get to heaven we shall see John Wesley there?*** Whitefield responded, "No, I don't think we shall." He added, ***I believe that Mr. John Wesley will have a place so near the throne of God that such poor creatures as you and I will be so far off as to be hardly able to see him.***

Regardless of their differences, they loved each other and believed that they were brothers in Christ despite their differences. When Wesley appeared to be approaching his death, Whitefield wrote him a letter and stated that "a radiant throne awaits you, and ere long you will enter into your master's joy. Yonder he stands with a massive crown, ready to put it on your head amidst an admiring throng of saints and angels." Wesley recovered from his illness, and Whitefield actually died first. Would Wesley come to the funeral? Whitefield asked Wesley to preach at it! It required three memorial services in London to pay respect to his life at which Wesley stated, ***"There are many doctrines of a less essential nature with regard to which even the most sincere children of God...are and have been divided for many ages. In these we may think and let think; we may 'agree to disagree.'"***

That story is a beautiful picture of the Body of Christ. I know it doesn't answer all the questions like when does a disagreement turn into a heresy, but it does give us an example concerning how to deal with a number of issues we address. Learn how to distinguish between essential truth and non-essential variances, and explain your stances with gentleness and reverence (1 Peter 3:15). It was John Wesley who said that the church must display: ***regarding essentials, unity; regarding non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity.***

It's not a bad way for us to begin this new year to behave towards one another. May we drop hatred, bitterness, animosity toward others, fear, hopelessness, negative gossip, and whatever tears down the church and people. Church let us together build up, encourage, share, study, worship, forgive, love, and support one another and always follow the way of Christ. We can all live and work together under the umbrella of God's grace and unconditional love.

*In Christian love and grace, Mel*



Children's Sunday School classes will resume at 9:15 a.m. this Sunday, January 9. The children will meet in the Chapel and parents will need to accompany their children during class. Safety precautions are being taken with the teachers wearing masks and having families sit at individual tables. This Sunday the children will finish the Advent story of the birth of Jesus and the arrival of the Three Wise Men. Next week we will begin our study on the Book of Genesis with Bible stories.

We hope to see your children this Sunday!



*We are saddened to announce the deaths of Evelyn Anderson on December 24, 2021 and Georgia Duncan on January 1, 2022. Please keep Linda Schmidt, Mary Ruth Ellis and their families in your thoughts and prayers.*



**Epiphany**  
**January 6, 2022**  
*Upper Room Discipline*  
*Daily Devotionals*

**Isaiah 60:1-6**

*Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.*

**Matthew 2:1-12**

*In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.*

Isaiah said they would bring gold and frankincense as gifts to praise the Lord. It would be a joyous occasion, when all the world would see the worth of God's people reflected in the glory of God's light. And so it was when the magi appeared at the home of Mary. Indeed, they were "overwhelmed with joy."

Their joy comes not only in finding Mary and her child at home after a lengthy journey to Bethlehem. Their joy expresses the fulfillment of a prophecy. When Isaiah said that people would come from everywhere and listed all the known nations of his day, those nations clearly listened and continued to tell the story of successive generations. Now they are here as promised; they have come to pay homage to Mary's child.

Isaiah said they would bring gold and frankincense as gifts to praise the Lord. He didn't mention myrrh, an ancient medicine. The magi from the East seem to know something about glory that Isaiah omitted. Glory, especially the kind that produces truth and justice, can be dangerous. Shed too much light into the darkness of deception and the deceivers get nervous. Shed too much light into the darkness of corruption and the corrupters get agitated. Shed too much light into the darkness of exploitation and the exploiters will kill you.



**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK...**

**Continued Prayer Concerns:** Jeanne Anne Pharis; Scott Paris; French Congregation & the people of the Congo; Pat Farmer; Doris Mobley's son, Don; Marilyn Smith's cousin, Kim Masters; Jack & Jerrie Lucko; Vicki Kovar; Hilaire Lukalema; Lisel Richardson's Aunt Vicki; Leslie Duncan's aunt, Ruth Smith; Joyce Hejl's brother & sister-in-law, Mike & Marianne Hejl; Sam & Ann Kiker; Judy White; Ross & Betty Longeway; Howard & Kara Schwoppe & their family; Sandra Mason; Pastor Ditu's sisters, Ruth & Marie; Wynelle Hencke; Byron Lechler; Bill & Roberta Reeves; Sarah Harris' husband, Tom; Lydia Acosta's daughter, Donna & her husband, Alfred; Carolyn Hodge; Martha Smith; Jane West; Bill Worthington; George & Karen Angle's daughter-in-law and sister-in-law, George & Mary Paris' sister, Jackie; David & Kay Stapp; Linda Smith; Tommie Martin's nephew, Scott Pashby & his family; Betty Holshouser's daughter, Lori; Norm & Betty Turnage; Patty Tucker's sister; Lydia Acosta; Art & Cathy Gordon's granddaughter & great-grandson; Jim Long; Barbara Provenzano's sister, Patricia Wiles; Patty Tucker; Judy White; Joe & Betty Crawford; George Angle's brother, Jim; Jack Bostick; George Conant; those affected by the tornados in Kentucky, Arkansas, Illinois and surrounding states; Betty Holshouser; Burt Moore with the loss of his sister and cousin; Toni Hood, Deana Hughes & family with the loss of Bill; Suzanne Nickel's nephew, Billy Phipps; Dayna Cox; Ovella Russell; Amy West's sister; Keith West

**This Week's Concerns:** J. R. Lennox; Lou Coursey; Linda Schmidt & family with the loss of Linda's mother, Evelyn Anderson; Mary Ruth Ellis & family with the loss of Georgia Duncan; Clifford & Marilyn Smith; George Paris; Barbara Provenzano's friends, Betty & Frank Losada; the people of Haiti and Afghanistan; prayers for our nation; those affected by COVID-19; our first responders, doctors, nurses, essential employees & frontline workers

**Military:** Ryan Kelly Hampton; Kyle Johnson; Sam Burnett; Krystal Calvert; Evan Hill; Matt Miller; Nathaniel Hill; Alex Sullivan-Green; Harrison Lenox



*Wednesday Morning Bible Study*  
*Book of Philippians*  
*January 12 • 10:00 a.m. • Fellowship Hall*  
*We invite you to join us.*

It starts immediately when the magi leave "for their own country by another road," leaving Herod in the dark. It continues to this day as rulers cling to power and the wealthy cling to money, ready to destroy any challenge to their privilege. Myrrh turns out to be the most honest gift of all.

***Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression?" (Baptismal Covenant I, The United Methodist Book of Worship).***





St. Luke United Methodist Church  
 3200 Denton Highway  
 Haltom City, TX 76117  
*Open hearts, open minds, open doors*

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Sunday Services: Sunday School • 9:15 a.m.

In-person and Online Worship • 10:30 a.m.

French Worship Service: In-person and Online Worship • 2:00 p.m.

Office Hours: Monday thru Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Friday 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

## NEWS ESPECIALLY FOR YOU:

NEWSLETTER ONLINE AT:

[www.st-luke-umc.net](http://www.st-luke-umc.net)



### Sunday, January 9, 2022

#### **Baptism of the Lord**

9:15 a.m. Sunday School  
 10:30 a.m. Morning Worship Service  
 2:00 p.m. French Worship Service

### Monday, January 10, 2022

9:00 a.m. Newsletter **DEADLINE**

### Tuesday, January 11, 2022

No Activities Scheduled

### Wednesday, January 12, 2021

10:00 a.m. Bible Study  
 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal

### Thursday, January 13, 2021

9:00 a.m. UMM Breakfast - Bluebonnet Café  
 5:30 p.m. Prayer Group

### Friday, January 14, 2022

10:00 a.m. Second Chance Resale Shop

### Saturday, January 15, 2022

10:00 a.m. Second Chance Resale Shop

### Sunday, January 16, 2022

#### **2nd Sunday after Epiphany**

9:15 a.m. Sunday School  
 10:30 a.m. Morning Worship Service  
 2:00 p.m. French Worship Service

## Youth News:



Luke 6:46, *Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?*

Dear parents, this Sunday, we started a study in the Gospel of Luke with the youth, and we meditated not only in this beautiful bible verse but also on the Upper Room booklet for Wednesday, December 29, 2021, by Jason John. The author is encouraging us to be faithful disciples of Christ. He suggests that we pray the proper prayer, which is that God will not change the world, but God will work in us so that we, will change the world in return. In addition to that, I also added; The Lord Jesus wants us to be his disciples. A disciple is someone who follows the teaching of his master. In our case, our master is Jesus. I believe that initially, Jesus is talking about religious people who do good works and talk about God, but they don't know him. He addresses them by telling them; "They call him Lord, but they are not following his teachings. If he is their Lord, they should follow his prescriptions. Following His prescription is a sign that people are submitted to him. The bible says that obedience is better than sacrifice." (1 Samuel 15:22) Following the teaching of Christ is better than all the sacrifices we could possibly make. Obedience to Christ is not optional because it is at the foundation of the Christian life. In this new year 2022, I encourage all the parents and youth to seek the direction of their life from the Lord, and one of the ways to follow Christ is to follow his teachings. His teachings are life for a Christian. They are simple and not hard. (1 John 5:3)

*Stanislas Ndecky*