



LIFE Groups

"Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ." – Acts 5:42

LIFE Groups are about people. Each group is made up of 6-12 people who meet each Sunday evening in someone's home. Groups are led by trained leaders who ensure that each meeting is well planned.

The acronym LIFE is shorthand for Love, Involvement, Fellowship, and Encouragement (and/or Evangelism). LIFE Groups are for enjoying, for belonging, and for learning. They provide a natural opportunity for Bible study, for fellowship, and for Christian ministry.

This year, we will be studying Old Testament history (chronologically) by looking at the lives of fourteen Old Testament characters. Our first LIFE Group meeting is scheduled for September 16 (the week after the church-wide picnic); leaders are being contacted/selected and they will be meeting soon. Max Houlton has agreed to lead the LIFE Group ministry this year – thank you Max!

Below is your first chance to sign up for LIFE Groups this year – please cut out the form and turn it in on Sunday. We really would like to have 100% participation. Everyone involved in a LIFE Group receives many blessings. – Lee

LIFE Group Sign Up

Name(s): _____

Preferred Group or Leader: _____

Would you be interested in being a group leader?

Yes _____ No _____

Would you be interested in assisting a leader?

Yes _____ No _____

Would you like to host a group in your home?

Yes _____ No _____

Preacher Selection Update

This stage of the process has been completed. The four candidates identified by the search committee have come and have been interviewed and they have shared with us through times of fellowship, information sharing and lessons.

The Search Committee and Elders would like to thank all of you for your participation in this process. Your attendance at the Saturday evening sessions, the feedback forms, and your verbal input are all greatly appreciated.

Now...the committee has met and evaluated all of the information. Prayerfully, they have submitted their suggestions to the elders. The Elders met on Tuesday evening and prayerfully considered the committee's recommendations and have asked for the Lord's continued direction in the process. The Elders are now planning to formulate an offer and hope to be in negotiation with one of the candidates by the end of this week and we will likely receive an update on the process this Sunday morning.

Our task is to continue to pray for God's guidance and to begin to prepare our hearts, minds, and lives for our new preacher and family to join us...if that is His will. It is possible that the process may need to be started all over again. Should we start over, we will need to continue to pray for all involved.

Please let the committee and Elders know you appreciate all the work and prayer they have given in this effort. May the end result be that God is glorified and that we will continue to "Know Christ and to Make Him Known!" – Lee

All-Church Annual Picnic September 9– Columbian Park



September 9 is the date for Elmwood's annual All-Church Picnic at Columbian Park. We'll plan to eat at 12:30. Bring plenty to share as we invite our neighbors, friends and family to join us. Come to Shelter A (big shelter nearest Home Hospital), and enjoy the food, fun, fellowship, and games.

Thank You!

I'm sorry this is a little late, but I would like to say "thank you" to everyone that brought meals to our family after I had Levi. It was so nice to not have to worry about what to make for dinner. I just can't thank you enough. It was greatly appreciated.

Love, Tammy, Jesse, Eryn & Levi Studebaker

It Was a Wild Ride!



Editor's note: Though the following words of thanks are from Michelle Robson, we owe many thanks to Michelle for all her tireless efforts to make this Vacation Bible School special to everyone who participated. Her organization and hours and hours of work are deeply appreciated. So, please be sure to give her your own "thank you" as she thanks the many who helped with this year's VBS.

If you read any of the Vacation Bible School announcements in the weekly newsletter or the "Avalanche Ranche" bulletin board in the back hallway, you saw the line "YOU can make it happen." Well, Elmwood, YOU made it happen! With a total of 85 children registered for VBS, 35 of them were Elmwood members and 50 were guests. During the five days, we had an attendance of 64, 65, 64, 57, and 54 kids.

The children enjoyed Bible adventures, treats, games, crafts, and singing. Each day they chose a challenge to perform at home to remind them of the daily Bible message. On one day they made a stuffed animal to give to the kids of the families who come to our food pantry.

I want to give a HUGE thank you and kudos to all who participated in and assisted with Avalanche Ranche. It took many people! To give you an idea, we had people who prayed, helped with publicity, invited and brought others, prepared documents and handouts, decorated the building, donated props and needed items, brought a live horse on day one, helped with registration, prepared and served snacks, led stations, led crews of children, assisted the leaders, stepped in at the last minute to fill unexpected voids, cleaned the building afterwards, and served at the celebration luncheon.

Elmwood can be proud of the quality of work shown by everyone involved. The station leaders did a fantastic job making learning about God fun and exciting. The crew leaders were wonderful helping the kids. The snack helpers provided tasty food. A special love and thank you goes to my husband Ed, who most often puts his wife's and kids' desires before his own. He was very patient and forgiving with me the last three months. To everyone who gave anything from prayers, to money, to just a few minutes of time or hours of time, thank you, thank you, thank you!! You did an awesome job! (At the risk of leaving someone's name off the list, I won't list each and every person who contributed.) Join me again next year, won't you?!

—Michelle Robson



Singing Anyone?



Josh & Gina Boyd will host an evening of singing at their home, 3528 Indianbrook Dr., Lafayette (south Laf.), this Friday, August 24, at 7:00.



Martha Johnson, Jim's mother, died Wednesday, August 15. Jim and Marihelen were in San Angelo, Texas, for the funeral on Saturday. We extend our sincere sympathies to Jim and Marihelen.

Attention Parents!

Children's Church for grades 1-5 will resume Sept. 2, during second service.

—Joe Ruhl

August 19, 2007

Class: 156 Worship: 297

Contribution: \$6,922

Budget: \$10,000/week

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Run Christian Run

I've known a few runners in my life. It's not something that I am particularly fond of doing. Running is so much work, and not just during the race, but there is so much training and work before hand. Running, or perhaps more accurately, racing sort of takes over your life.

Despite my avoidance of the track, I think there are a couple of good lessons that we as Christians can learn from runners. Paul used the language of running a race in his first letter to the Corinthians, so if you think I am copying from someone; I am.

In 1 Corinthians 9:25 Paul says "Athletes exercise self-control in all things..." (NRSV). And it's true! The athlete changes the way in which he or she lives his or her life for the purpose of training their body to be good at the sport in which they participate. Everything that the athlete does is taken into consideration: sleep, diet, exercise, extra-curricular activities. In other words, the athlete's life is centered on the sport. It defines who he is and what he does in all situations.

This is what Christianity should look like for us as well. Paul continues: "Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we receive an imperishable one" (NRSV). Paul connects something that the Corinthians were familiar with to the Christian walk. Athletes train all the time, and in all things. In the same way, the Christian's life is centered around Christ, and every action is part of the game. Every action is important to the Christian and every action that one makes should bring him or her closer to the center, closer to Christ.

A second lesson we can learn from the runner is this: to run a race requires training. We may understand this, but I don't think that we often internalize it. I think that we have become very good at *trying* but not so good at *training*. In reality, if I were told to run the marathon in the Olympics tomorrow, I could TRY with all my heart, and I would not be able to cross the finish line, let alone win the race. It would require TRAINING. In the same way, I do not think that we can be faithful to our mission, which is to show other people Christ's love, by trying really hard. To be able to show others love, we need to train ourselves.

Just like runners, training can be difficult, but it also brings about its own set of joys. -Phil

Prayer concerns....

Susan Swensen is at home now and thankful her sister, Betsy, is able to be there to care for her...**Max Houlton** awaits upcoming doctor appointments before they schedule surgery for lung cancer in September...**Bob Stafford** awaits results on recent tests on his back...**Susan Shidler**, Sheryl Willison's sister, has surgery on Wednesday at St. Vincent Hospital in Indianapolis. She has blockage in her kidneys...**Mary Cole**, Cheri Vaughn's mother, is now at home. She is continues to battle emphysema and asthma...Continue praying for **Donnie Rigdon, Carolyn Rigdon, Valley Stockton, Dick & Janice Waterstraat, Henry Hunt, Oka LeMaster, Marie DeWoody, Joe Bailey, Sue Sill, Dottie Roberts, Hattie Coffel, Kaden Koebecke, Kathy Ciota, Charles Carter, Charles Moore, Irene Sims, Mary Tavana, Willard Farmer, Paul & Argie Verett, Ruth Marks, Delpha Allen, Anna Dale, Minnie Scott, Carrie High, Irene Fox, and Burnell Gulden.**



Serving in our military: **Jeremy Crable & Michael Bryenton** in Afghanistan; **Philip Devine, Joshua Thompson, Michael Farris** (*Bill's grandson*), and **Ti Draughon** (*Amanda Martin's husband*) in Iraq; and **Chris Martin**, in South Korea.

New Fall Class Offered

Women's roles in the church will be the subject of a Wednesday evening series from **September 12 through November 28**. Participants will study the major positions on this issue, including reviews of key Biblical passages. Class presentations will distill the writings of prominent authors and handouts will be provided for more detailed personal study. A short class discussion, moderated by Joe Ruhl, will follow each presentation. Contact Sue Wilder if you would like more information. Anyone interested in learning more about this topic is invited to attend. Watch future newsletters for room assignment.



August 22, 7 PM....Bible classes for all
August 29, 11:30 AM....Senior Servants meet
at Golden Corral for lunch

September 9, noon....All-church picnic at
Columbian Park, Shelter A

September 16....LIFE Groups beegin

September 21, 22, 23....Men's Retreat at Ross Camp

Read:
Eccl. 7-12; Song of Songs;
Isa. 1-6; II Cor. 3-10

2007 Spiritual Adventure

Week 36: September 3-9

The *Song of Songs*, and to some it is known as the *Song of Solomon* or the *Canticle of Canticles*, is one of the most enigmatic books in the Canon. This language may seem similar to the “holy of holies” or the “vanity of vanities.” Why is this *the* “song of songs” that God wants us to hear and to sing? It is unimportant whether or not Solomon wrote this beautiful poem that is in our Bibles. Perhaps what is important is that the *Song of Songs* is both a Hebrew idiom and an allegory for God’s love of His people. What theological lessons can we derive from what some scholars have called erotic love poetry? Is there a lesson for us, or is this simply a guide for marital love between a husband and a wife? Yes, I think so, but I think that the theology is much deeper than the love defined by the Greeks as *eros*. Even though I think that *eros* has received a bad rap from many. After all it is one of the many complex components of love and it appears to be the love in the *Song of Songs*. We learn from John in his epistles and gospel numerous times that “God is love” and that we are to “love one another.” If one examines the word for love in the Greek, we would find that it is translated in John’s writing as *agape* most often. Love, in its many forms and complexities, is likely the take home message in the *Song of Songs*. Think of a couple that you know very well that has been happily married for a long time. Perhaps even for decades. It is likely that this couple enjoys the love that they have for each other intimately and in the many dimensions of true love. I think that this is only a glimpse of how much God loves us. The *Song of Songs* gives us only a window into the depth, breadth, and complexity of God’s love for us and for the love that we are to have for all of His creation.

On a journey in the Promise Land, *Mark S. McClain*