



The Truth About Church

Several years ago I was in art class making something that would later be fired up in the kiln. I was proud of my sculpture and I called it Mr. Clay Head (as proud as I was, art schools around the country were not beating down my door). I had just finished my piece when I noticed that my friend had nothing but a blob of clay. I asked him about why he hadn't started the assignment. He replied that he had. He told me that his piece was a work in progress. He knew what he wanted and how to make it, but he was going to take his time and pay attention to detail. After hearing this well-thought-out plan to conceive something, I glanced back at Mr. Clay Head and felt a little embarrassed. There is a great difference between what something *is* and what it *will become*.

How the church would be different if everyone learned this lesson! It is easy to look at the church and become upset over certain issues (or even certain people!!), and it is even easier to leave when things aren't going exactly the way you want them to go. The tougher (and more rewarding) road to take, however, is to make a sincere effort to understand the nature of church and to let that guide your actions.

Church is not a perfect place. It is a place where imperfect people gather to glance at and have union with a perfect God. Much like my friend's art piece, the church is a work in progress. It "is *being* grown into a holy temple in the Lord . . . *being* built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit (Ephesians 2:21-22) [*emphasis mine*]." It isn't there yet. It is *still* heading that direction, but not there at present.

God, the master artist, is shaping us into something different than we are. This produces 3 immediate results: 1) We know we have to continually be open to changing ourselves for His glory 2) We do not look the church as a perfect representation of God, but rather we look to God to change the church and 3) We engage the community around us with the message they need to verbally hear: Elmwood is a place where no perfect people are allowed. Invite your friends to come join an imperfect people as we engage a perfect God, a God who loves his works in progress....

-Dan

***Our vision:
Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known***

Status of SHAPE

We started the SHAPE program to help members become involved in church ministries that fit their spiritual gifts, interests, and abilities. As part of this program, we are having our trained interviewers interview all church members. The results of these interviews will reveal that some members are already as involved as they can be, others are involved but would like to change the activities in which they are involved, others have so many responsibilities that they cannot add any church work to what they are already doing. Still others may, because of physical problems, not be able to add to their activities. Our goal is to maximize the satisfaction of members with their church involvement. Thus far 93 members have completed their interviews, 44 members have been assigned to an interviewer but have not completed their interview, and 126 members have not yet been assigned to an interviewer. In the next few weeks Rick Swensen will call those who have not been assigned to an interviewer and ask who they would feel comfortable conducting their interview.

-Rick Swensen

Pray for yourself. Pray that God will show Himself to you in new ways that will excite you and increase your love for Him. That your commitment to him will be strengthened.



Thank You!

"Why I Believe"

On Sunday nights, February 25 and March 4, at the 6:00 worship hour, **Joe Ruhl** will present his reflections on "Why I Believe." In past years Joe has treated us to series like "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made" and "Evolution through the Eyes of Faith." Joe is a former teacher of the year for the state of Indiana and teaches science and genetics at Jefferson High School in Lafayette. You'll not want to miss this series! Invite family and friends.

Dear Elmwood Church,
Thank you so much for the lovely flower spray for the memory of our Mark. Thank you for your constant support to Mom, Dad and Susie! We are all so blessed to know you and your constant love in Christ! Blessings!

Lisa, Karen, Allen, Paul & Matt

Women's Ministry...

The new Celebration Team, which oversees the celebration of life events of Christ's family at Elmwood, are currently focusing on baby and wedding showers. We are looking forward to adding more celebrations as the ministry grows. The team committee members are Scheryl Gaylor, Becky Pitt and Peggy Linback. We are not wanting to take over the shower hosting if one is already planned, but to be a resource for a home, hostess, and equipment availability, if needed. If no one else is planning a shower then we will get one started. We will need good communication to assure that no one is left out. Please call one of the committee members if you have any questions, or to relay any information.

-Peggy Linback

I would sincerely like to thank everyone at Elmwood who has sent me cards, called me and prayed for me during the passing of my grandmother, Mary Burns. Thank you for caring so much about me and my family.

Sincerely, Beth Holt

Going Away Party...

Women, please mark your calendar for **Saturday, March 3, 5:30 PM**, for a carry-in dinner for **Lisa Crowe** at the building in A2. Come enjoy the fellowship and memories with Lisa.

*If you regularly attend Elmwood, and are not receiving the **Christian Chronicle**, please notify the church office. Your name and address will be forwarded to the publication office for you to receive the next issue.*

Many thanks...

The folks who were treated by "Operation Valentine" express their thanks to the Elmwood children and their adult helpers. One recipient said the children's efforts and artwork reminded her of Bible verses about love, kindness, respect, and being considerate of others. The Valentine treat bags are much appreciated!

February 11, 2007
Class: 207 Worship: 280
Contribution: \$8,853
Budget: \$8,550

Celebration...

All are invited to attend Trinity Mission's Promotional Ceremony of **John Pippins** this Saturday, February 17, at the Community Reformed Church, 2501 South 18th Street, Lafayette, from 2:00 until 4:00 PM. Please RSVP by Wednesday, February 14, to Brian or Doug at 447-0271.

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Winterfest

Well, this is the big weekend many of us have been waiting for...actually some have really been longing for this weekend to come for about 51 weeks. Winterfest is an experience that is very hard if not impossible to describe. I won't lie to you; it is a lot of work and responsibility for the youth minister and for the adult chaperones. Nine hours is a long drive. 40 people are a lot to keep up with, make housing arrangements for, and to make the necessary registrations. But it is worth it. I want to try to draw you the picture again. There will be nearly 15,000 people in Gatlinburg, just for Winterfest. The group is so big that we do not fit in the convention center all at once. To accommodate everyone, there has to be an early session and a late session – our group feels that time is best used by the late session, so that is our choice again this year. Last week, there was even a Winterfest rally in Texas (around 5,000 in attendance I think). Jeff Walling is usually the keynote speaker (he is this year) and he brings his best stuff. The entertainment and other classes are also top notch. I honestly don't know how to pinpoint the power of Winterfest, but I know it is there. I also know God is there and it is so awesome to watch His Holy Spirit work on the hearts of the young and the old, the well trained and the novice, and the seeker as well as the saved. Our group will come back a little different...we always do. You will have to forgive us if our joy and enthusiasm offend you – it is easier just to join in with us. I want to thank all of you who have helped make this year's trip happen. Many of you have provided breakfast foods to help the cost of the trip stay as low as possible. Others of you have provided scholarship monies to help some attend who might not have otherwise been able. Most of you have been and will continue to pray for our group – please do...we never know what our return trip weather will look like.

This year, Josh Boyd challenged the teens to really use the trip to reach out to their friends. Several took him up on the challenge. We have several teens going with us who have not totally figured out how this "God thing" works. They are genuinely seeking and I pray (join me) they will really meet Him at Winterfest and/or through the relationships established and the events to follow this powerful weekend. Each year, Elders and youth ministers are asked to join those who respond to God's call and pray for them. Maybe several from the Lafayette area will be in that group this year. This year's theme is very evangelistic: **"The Prize."** Pray and pray some more! – Lee



Dick Waterstraat is in St. Elizabeth Hospital, room 3116. He hopes to be sent home soon....**Zoe Graham**, a friend of Beth Holt, is having surgery this week....Continue praying for **Roy Stafford, Jaunita Bird, Virginia Webb, Henrietta Frampton, Seth Mullen, Willard Farmer, Annie Crowder, Paul & Argie Verett, Beth Holt, Kaden Koebecke, Linda Smith, Marcia Swails, Lynn Robinson, Delpha Allen, Anna Dale, Minnie Scott, Carrie High, Irene Fox, Ruth Marks, & Burnell Gulden.** **Ivan Ellis** asks for prayers for a court hearing this Friday on his disability status.

Serving in our military: **Jeremy Crable & Michael Bryenton** (*Afghanistan*); **Brian Guthrie** (*Qatar, Persian Gulf*), **Philip Devine & Robbie Mullinax**, stateside training; **Joshua Thompson** (*grandson of Mary Lou Bough in Iraq*), **Jon Kiefner** (*Amanda Guthrie's brother in Iraq*); and **Amanda Martin** (*South Korea*).

**THE SNOW SERVANTS FOR THIS WEEK
(FEB. 11-17) ARE
ALISON RUHL & WILL WADE.
THEY ARE ON CALL TO
REMOVE SNOW**

Good \$ense Budget Class Wednesday, 6 PM



The **Good \$ense Budget Class**, taught by Janet Boston, will meet at 6:00 PM (*please note time is one hour before Wednesday night Bible classes*) for the next 6 Wednesday evenings. It's not too late to join the class. Questions may be directed to Janet at 477-7668.



February 14, 6 PM....Good \$ense budget class
February 14, 7 PM....Bible Classes for all
Feb. 16-18....Teen WINTERFEST in Gatlinburg, TN
Feb. 18, 6 PM....LIFE Groups
Feb. 25 & March 4, 6 PM....Joe Ruhl shares
"Why I Believe"

Read:
Psalms 22-40;
Acts 5:17-8:40

2007 Spiritual Adventure

Week 9: February 26–March 4

The Psalmist speaks to God in prayer, in praise, in faith, and trust. David's contributions are quite evident by this noted singer and musician. David prayed and sang to God often. He petitioned God to rescue him, to have mercy on his sufferings, for deliverance, to answer his prayers, to come to his defense, for God's protection, for relief from illness, and for help with his many troubles. David poured out his heart to God. Likewise, David told God of his joyful trust in Him, celebrated worship to Him, sang hymns of praise, was joyful for God's forgiveness, praised Him for answering prayers, for His protection, and for offering him wisdom. David thanked God for all the many good things He had done for him.

In Acts, we read about the New Testament church in its infancy. Like David, these new Christians began a walk of faith with God and the church. As David did, they put their faith in God and learned to trust Him every day. They learned not to be arbiters of God. God knows far more than we do about His plans and purposes. In the end, it's about having trust in a faithful God who knows what He is doing. Life will have its ups and downs. Sometimes life will never seem fair. When we trust God, like David and the new church in Acts did, we will discover that God is faithful.

When we realize that this world and all that is in it is unstable and unpredictable, we are left with a longing for something that lasts. God's righteousness endures forever. It is unharmed and untouched by time and circumstances. Nothing in the world can take it away, and it endures when life has seemingly taken everything away. God is our rock through faith in Jesus Christ. Be inspired by the Lord and His word. You will find what David and the new Christians in Acts knew. God alone offers a righteousness that endures forever. –David Weckerly