



## My Partners in the Gospel

Most of our L.I.F.E. Groups spent some time discussing Philippians 1:1-11 last Sunday night. Within that section we find Paul saying, *"In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel..."* (1:4-5). Later he goes on to write, *"It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me"* (1:7).

There were two words that stood out to me in those few verses. These words also stood out to most of the people in the group I attended. Do you see them? Did your group notice them? The two words were *partnership* and *share*. The group I attended had some great discussion centered around these two words.

For Paul, partnering with this church brought him great joy. He said he always prayed with great joy because of this partnership. And he knew that whether he was in chains for his faith or standing before a great mob defending the gospel, his Philippian brothers and sisters were sharing with him in the grace of God. His victory of faith was their victory of faith. His ups were their ups and his downs were their downs because they were partners in the faith who shared in God's grace. It was an intimate bond.

The Bible paints a picture of healthy churches experiencing this kind of sharing and partnership. In Romans we find Paul telling Christians that we should *"rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn"* (12:15). In Galatians we find that we are to *"carry each other's burdens"* (6:2). When I read those texts I hear Paul echoing the words *partnership* and *share*.

I hope that you experience that kind of partnership and sharing with your brothers and sisters right here at Elmwood. I know that when I pray for all of you I pray with great joy because I feel blessed to be called your partner in the gospel. We share together in God's grace.

Now, I look forward to seeing what new nuggets of truth the Holy Spirit reveals in our next section of Philippians. -Gilbert

## Telling our Story

Don Miller, has written several books in recent years that have become fairly popular with Christian readers. His books *Blue like Jazz*, *Searching for God Knows What*, and *Through Painted Deserts* all work in much the same way. In each of his books he opens up a section of his life, allowing his readers to step into that portion of his life and experience some of the things that he has experienced.

These books are not complex, nor difficult to read, but they have captured the attention of much of the Christian community because of Miller's honesty and openness. Miller discusses his victories and his failures, times of spiritual high and times of spiritual low, and couches his many narratives in theological reflection. In the telling of his story, he tells the story of God at work in his life.

Storytelling is not something that is emphasized in many traditions, ours included; though I think with LIFE groups the opportunity to tell our story presents itself. There is something that we miss if we are unable to listen to our fellow believer's stories. When we are invited into another person's story we are given an opportunity to not only see where God has worked in another person's life, but also we are given new perspective on where and how God might be working in our own lives.

I'm not saying that everyone should get up in front of the congregation and tell us all about themselves, but maybe, in the course of our day, we can find ways to tell the people we interact with on a regular basis something important about ourselves: our story. -Phil

# Dynamic Love

(new Sunday morning class for couples)

Every man and woman yearns for intimacy in mind, body, and spirit. *Dynamic Love* is an advanced marriage course that teaches couples to experience the deepest and most satisfying levels of intimacy, and explore the spiritual dimensions of their relationship.

This material and delivery system provide unique opportunities to develop relationship skills that include but also goes beyond communication, compatibility, conflict management, decision-making and sexuality. All of this is sound teaching based on the Bible.

Bill and Carol Bell are teaching the advanced marriage course that started January 20th at the regular Bible class time in room 204. This class is for married couples and both husband and wife must attend. The class will last 12 weeks. Call the church office at 765-447-2847 and leave a message for Bill Bell about your interest in the class or to pose any questions. All materials will be provided, but bring your own Bible.

While the material we will be using was developed by the Family Dynamics Institute, this class is not the eight-week seminar called *Dynamic Marriages* you have heard about and which so many Elmwood couples have completed. As described above, *Dynamic Love* is a Bible class where the teaching we receive will help each couple become closer in all dimensions of the marriage relationship, but especially the spiritual dimension.

-Bill Bell

## Senior Servants....

The Senior Servants have plans to meet at Christos New City Grill (on Teal Road) on Wednesday, January 30, at 11:30 AM.

## Thank You

*A great big thank you to everyone who helped fill John & Lynae Stafford's truck with clothing for the flood victims. Lynae delivered them to an "overwhelmed," but thankful, minister in Delphi.*

## Good Sense Budgeting

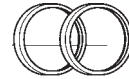
Do you ever wonder where the money goes? Most people do. We cannot ignore the reality of the importance of money. Some view it as the root of all evil, because it has led to crime, suicide, divorce, worry, scheming and many other nightmares. This crucial matter has no shortage of information in the Bible. Some two thousand Scripture passages touch on the theme of money.

A six week DVD series will be facilitated by Janet Boston beginning January 30, 2008 in the Conference Room. The program will begin at 5:50 PM each Wednesday evening until 6:50 PM. You will discover tools and develop skills to help you to manage and control your finances. **THIS CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE!**

A sign-up form is available for you to register (free of charge) in the Farris foyer. Please register by this Sunday, January 27, 2008, to allow time to prepare handouts.



## Engagement Announced!



Joe and Gail Ruhl are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, **Alison**, to **Will Wade**, of Leslie, Michigan. They are planning a July 19 wedding in Jackson, Michigan. Congratulations to Alison and Will!



**Lewie Asbill**, grandfather of Craig Asbill, recently died. He was living with Craig's parents in Tennessee. Craig & Angela and family attended the funeral in Marble Falls, Texas, last week. Our sympathies to Craig and his family.



The food pantry is in need of personal items: soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, & toilet paper.

Also, a few volunteers are needed. If you have some free time through the week and could volunteer 2 hours of your time on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday (1:00-3:00), contact John Stafford at 474-8478.

**January 20, 2008**

Class: 166 Worship: 260

Contribution: \$5,562

Budget: \$10,000/week



## Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort Inc.

Before last week, only a few of us here at Elmwood knew anything about this group out of Nashville, TN. I had heard about their efforts mainly because of their work in helping with the Katrina victims. Over the past couple weeks, we have learned a lot about this group of Christians and we are very thankful for their efforts...the flood victims and the Red Cross in our area are even more thankful.

It seems like we have some flooding of the Wabash and the Tippecanoe each year...this year was the worst I have seen. I had wondered if the Disaster Relief group would help out with our local flooding problem and on Thursday the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, we found out. Ralph Coles, Advisory Board Member for the group, called us and said they had a semi-trailer stocked and ready to go; we just needed to let them know where the trailer needed to be delivered. Dave Weckerly made some calls and soon we had a trailer on its way to Camp Tecumseh in Brookston – very near an area of the worst flooding damage. On Monday the 14<sup>th</sup>, about 20 Elmwood (**THANK YOU ALL!**) members and a few other friends met the truck and had it unloaded in about 2 hours. We had originally been told it would take 8-10 people; we were thankful we had more! Before the truck arrived, Ralph called again and asked if we wanted another trailer delivered – this one would have cleaning supplies: chemicals, paper products, etc. (15 or so Elmwood folks and others from the community showed up to unload this trailer). The first trailer contained brooms, mops, shovels, rakes, drinking water, sweet tea, cleaning supply kits, personal toiletry items, baby items, bedding, and 402 “family boxes” containing food supplies for a family of four to last a week. Each box contained 43 items – you may have seen the boxes on display on Sunday morning in the Farris Foyer. I shared some of the following information with the church on Sunday.

**How Our Effort Works:** *The Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort immediately responds to any major disaster in the continental United States by sending truckloads of emergency food, water, cleaning, and other supplies to disaster victims. We are a non-profit corporation, tax-exempt organization. Only eleven employees are paid in the entire organization. Volunteers are the secret to the success of our organization.*

**Our History:** *The CCDRE unofficially began operations in 1990. Since 1991, the organization has distributed more than \$35 million in emergency food and supplies to disaster victims in 35 states.*

**Distribution of Supplies:** *CCDRE only works through the local Church of Christ in the community or town where the disaster has occurred. If there is no Church of Christ in the town, Disaster Relief will contact the nearest town that has a Church of Christ and ask for help. Supplies will be distributed by this congregation “in the name of the Lord” to anyone who has been affected by the disaster regardless of race, color, creed, or religion. For more info:*

[www.disasterrelieffort.org](http://www.disasterrelieffort.org).

– Lee

## Prayer Concerns....

**Peter Tavana** had surgery to repair a hernia on Friday (18th). He will be unable to return to work for about 6 weeks....**David Henke** had surgery on Wednesday, January 23, to remove a malignant tumor from his colon ....Though Don Vice's mother, **Barbara Scott**, has been diagnosed with cancer, because of her age, she will not undergo chemo or radiation....Continue praying for **Mandy Anderson, Paul Thomas, Herb King, Max Houlton, Scott Baker, David Riley, Henrietta Frampton, Eileen Richardson, Marie DeWoody, Hattie Coffel, Kaden Koebecke, Irene Sims, Mary Tavana, Paul & Argie Verett, Delpha Allen, Ivan Ellis, Valley Stockton, Eagle Bailey, Minnie Scott, Anna Dale, Irene Fox, and Burnell Gulden.**

Serving in our military: **Michael Farris** in Afghanistan; **Steve Brady, Ti Draughon** in Iraq; and **Chris Martin**, in South Korea.

## Lafayette Christian School's Kindergarten Call Out

Lafayette Christian School's **Kindergarten Call Out** is scheduled for this **Thursday evening, January 24, starting at 6:00 PM.** The school is offering a 3-day-per-week -all day class and a 5-day-per-week-all day class. Parents seeking a Christ-centered education for their kindergartener are urged to attend. Contact principal, Abe Vreeke at 447-3052 for more information or check out [www.lafayettechristian.org](http://www.lafayettechristian.org).

## Campus Minister Candidate here this weekend

The Campus Minister Search Committee has invited the first of three candidates to visit Elmwood this weekend, January 25-27. He will attend our Sunday worship service. Plan to be here to meet him.



**January 23, 7 PM....**Bible classes for everyone

**January 25-27....**Campus Minister candidate visits Elmwood

**January 27, 9:30 AM....***Dynamic Love* class, led by Bill & Carol Bell, in room 204.

**January 27, 6 PM....**LIFE Groups

**January 30, 11:30 AM....**Senior Servants at Christos

**January 30, 7 PM....**Good \$ense Budget Class, taught by Janet Boston in conference room

