



## Did You Think to Pray?

There is a song in our song books that asks a simple question: *Ere you left your room this morning, did you think to pray?* What a convicting question. Most mornings my answer would be, “No.”

Prayer seemed to be at the forefront of all that Jesus did, and his disciples followed suit by putting prayer at the forefront of all that they did. Luke tells us that Jesus “*often withdrew to lonely places and prayed*” (5:16). Our roadmap passage, Acts 2:42, tells us that the early church devoted themselves to prayer. Later in Acts we find the chosen 12 delegating the responsibility of distributing bread to the widows so that they can give more of their time “*to prayer and the ministry of the word*” (6:4).

What is my excuse? I could say that I am too busy, but that would be a lie. Plus, Martin Luther said that he prayed because he *was* so busy. Listen to these words: “*I have so much business I cannot get on without spending three hours daily in prayer.*” I am not too busy to pray. There can be no “too busy to pray” moments in our lives.

The honest answer is that I get distracted. I have other things that occupy my time and attention. Often prayer gets relegated to my leftovers. Whatever I have in me at the end of the day goes to prayer, usually right before I dose off to sleep. I am exaggerating some. I pray throughout the day, but often quick prayers as I drive from point A to point B, or when something hits me while checking my email.

I want to strive for more fervent prayer in my life. I want to scream the words of the disciples as they asked, “*Lord, teach us to pray*” (Luke 11:1). I want to echo the words of Archbishop Tait when he said, “*I want a life of greater, deeper, truer prayer.*”

How about you? *Ere you left your room this morning, did you think to pray?*

-Gilbert

***God is good...all the time.  
All the time...God is good.***

## Pure & Faultless Religion

John Wesley, a cleric in the Anglican Church once said, “Wherever riches have increased, the essence of religion has decreased in the same proportion.” That is a pretty strong statement. Wesley seems to be saying that among the rich, religion becomes defiled. I’m not sure that this statement is a fair one, though I think it offers those of us who are in America—the wealthiest of nations—a chance to re-examine ourselves. We need to ensure that our religion is still pure and that the essence of Christianity has not decreased with the growth of our personal and national wealth, and standing.

James says, “*Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world*” (James 1:27 NRSV). Perhaps now we can begin to see why John Wesley made such a strong statement about increasing riches. In fact, I believe that this verse from James was very important to John Wesley and the way he ordered his life. Wesley and his followers were very involved in what we now term as social justice. They worked with the poor, the homeless, the prisoners in jail, and the outcasts of society. Wesley is saying that taking care of the poor and hoarding wealth are antithetical to one another.

Perhaps Wesley’s statement is not entirely accurate; after all, great things can be done with great wealth, but if there is one thing I learned in Nashville, for sure, it is that there is more work yet to be done.

-Phil

**Ginger Maxwell-Spenard** is in Home Hospital, room 3334. Later this week doctors will determine whether surgery is necessary....**Margaret Gustafson** was in the hospital last week for tests. She is now home and her daughter, Janet, from California, has come to stay awhile....**Pete Swank** will consult with a specialist in Indianapolis on Friday for surgery for an aorta aneurysm....**Ken Nicholson** was sent home with IV nourishment. He will consult with doctors later this week for any further treatment or surgery...



**Eloise Shank**, Andrea Browell's mother, had surgery Monday at St. Vincent's Hospital in Indianapolis for a broken hip....**Harry Linback**, former Elmwood member, is in room 223 at Clarian Arnett Health following his open-heart surgery on Thursday. He is improving, though will be there for at least another week....**Jan Lucas** is doing much better. She is able to eat some soft foods....**Diann Doty** will continue chemotherapy treatments every other week (14 in all)....**Dick Waterstraat** has angioplasty surgery on Monday, April 6, at Clarian Arnett....**David Brutans**, son-in-law of Shirley Farmer, will meet with the oncologist on Wednesday, the radiologist on Thursday and a liver specialist in Indianapolis on Friday of this week....**Matt Moore**, husband of Andrea Browell's cousin, Amy, is hospitalized with a brain tumor and MS....**Dottie Munson**, Scott Baker's mother-in-law, has lung cancer....Continue praying for: **Riley Eberhart**, **John Adams**, Bill's father, **Josh Oliver**, **Charles Carter** (*Marsha Moore's father, stomach cancer*), **Charles Moore**, **Justin Thomas**, **Ray Peden**, **Hattie Coffel** (*Rosewalk Village*), **Mary Tavana**, **Sheryl Willison**, **Ted Heitman**, **Annie Crowder**, **Diane West**, **Eric Waltz** (*now home and able to work a few hours per day*), **Dorothy Walters**, **Irene Fox**, **Willie Batts**, **Ethel Cable & Edith McCoy** (*Digby House*), **Eugene Zinn**, **Kaden Koebecke**, **Margie Campbell**, **Valley Stockton** (*Regency Place*), **Irene Sims**, **Marie DeWoody**, **Paul & Argie Verett**, **Delpha Allen**, and **Minnie Scott**.

Phyllis Simmerman's nephew, **Josh Martin**, is serving in Iraq for the next 12 months.

## Guest Speaker, Jan Swensen, this Sunday, April 5

**Jan C. Swensen**, Rick Swensen's brother, will be presenting the sermons for both services **Sunday, April 5, 2009**. Jan is a lawyer by profession, but he has made many trips to Israel on archeological expeditions and has many pictures of historical sites in Israel. Missionaries in India asked him if he would visit churches in India and present his slides of places in Israel of Biblical importance. In his trips to India he noticed children living out on the streets without any apparent homes or parents to care for them. So he started to develop homes for abandoned children in India. He will talk about these homes in his sermons Sunday. Come hear about "**Slumdog Orphans in India.**"



**Dick Stout**, longtime Elmwood member a number of years ago, died Tuesday morning, March 24. His memorial service was Friday at the Holland Park Church of Christ in Simpsonville, South Carolina. Our deepest sympathies to Mary Ann and their children, Susan, Sandy, and David. If you wish to send a card to Mary Ann, her address is 18 Fair Oaks Drive, Greenville, SC 29615. Her phone is 864.297.0110.



## It's a Girl!



**Terry & Ginger Maxwell-Spenard** have a new granddaughter! **Olivia Hope Maxwell** was born March 25 to **Cory and Melinda** in Michigan. She weighed 7 pounds and measured 20 inches long. Ask grandma, Ginger, about all the black hair she has. Is she planning a new hairdo? Congratulations to all!

**Save the dates:  
Vacation Bible  
School  
June 8-12, 6-8 PM**



The **food pantry** is always in need of personal items: **soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste & toothbrushes, and toilet paper**. We appreciate any donations you make.

**March 29, 2009**  
**Class: 164 Worship: 268**  
**Contribution: \$9,621**

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## Wake Up!

Are you hearing the messages? It hasn't been too long ago that the shepherds here at Elmwood had the church family work through some studies based on the **Purpose Driven Life**; a call to live out our passions in a Godly way – rather than just floating through life like so many of us have done...and are doing. A new favorite movie of mine is Bucket List – where two guys facing their mortality make a list of the things they want to do before they die. This morning, I just heard about a new book that seems to be on the road to having the same kind of impact as the book and movie mentioned above. One intro to the book reads, “What if you only had one month to live. What changes would you make in your life? Kerry and Chris Shook’s New York Times best-seller, *One Month to Live: Thirty Days to a No-Regrets Life* encourages readers to face their own mortality and live life to the absolute fullest.” No, I haven’t read the book, but I fully intend to because I’m like many of you and I need to get “booted” every now and then to be reminded to do the right thing. More than that, like many of you, I have far too many things clamoring for my time and my attention and sometimes I don’t remember how to say “no.” The danger of course is that we over-commit and we find ourselves up against a deadline, way too often. We have become adrenaline junkies and professional procrastinators.

I have a dear brother here at Elmwood who doesn’t even realize it, but he helps keep my feet to the fire. This guy is a Christian opportunist! He is constantly looking for things to do to bless other people. He seldom even considers whether people will notice what has been done or not, he just does it because it is the right thing to do. He is also constantly looking for people who come our way, looking for the Lord. He is very comfortable with our church family “being Jesus” to those the Lord sends our way – whenever and however. Sometimes, I wonder if some of the stuff I do even matters – he reminds me that we just need to do what we can do and leave the rest to God. I need that wake up call.

Scripture is full of admonition of the same type as the books, movie, and the brother above. Consider these words:

Mat 6:34 *“Therefore don’t worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”*

Rom 13:11 *“Besides this, knowing the time, it is already the hour for you to wake up from sleep, for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.”*

Gal 6:9, 10 *“So we must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don’t give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, we must work for the good of all, especially for those who belong to the household of faith.”*

What am I going to do? I think I’ll wake up, do at least one thing today I would have put off till tomorrow and remember that only God knows how many days we have left to serve Him here. Let’s all Wake Up!  
– Lee

## Spring Cleaning?

Trinity Mission is a faith based organization that provides assistance to those plagued with drugs and alcohol abuse. They fund their program with contributions from churches and individuals. In addition, they operate a retail store at 1224 Union Street where they sell 2<sup>nd</sup> hand clothing, used books, furniture, functioning appliances and other used items. In addition to helping fund the program, the store is used as part of the rehabilitation program. The store survives on the contributions of used items, but inventory is currently low. If you have used clothing or excess furniture that still has life in it that you would like to give away, the store would be interested. Contact the store at 742-4931 if you have questions.

## Setting the Scene for Vacation Bible School

Sessions for creating VBS decor will take place on Wednesday nights during the months of April and May. We will meet at 6:00 PM in room 102 (former preschool room near the kitchen). If you would like to help, bring your dinner (if desired) and join us for part or all of the sessions. Everyone is welcome and appreciated. Looking forward to a God-glorifying VBS!  
-Michelle Robson

## Picture Directory Update

We’d like to update our picture directory in April to include those who are worshipping at Elmwood, but who are not currently in the directory. If you’ve been here more than a couple of times, we’d like to include you to help connect names and faces. Farrell Simmerman will be taking pictures on Sunday mornings beginning April 12. Bill Hodges will be attempting to contact you for a picture time to minimize waiting. Bill can be contacted at 449-1255 if he fails to make connections with you.



- April 1, 7 PM....Bible classes for all
- April 4, 1:30 PM....Courtney Buss & Craig Hodges wedding in Jeffersonville, Indiana
- April 5, AM Worship....Jan Swensen, Rick’s brother, will speak on his mission work in India
- April 5, 6 PM....Worship & Finger Foods at Elmwood
- April 10-12....Leadership Training for Christ

Read:  
*Joshua 1-18;*  
*Mark 1-4*

# 2009 Spiritual Adventure






## Week 16: April 13-19

### Hindrance or Helper?

One of the recurring themes through the book of Joshua is that of God expanding His territory. The Israelites, God's chosen people, journey through the land and God delivers kingdoms and territories into their hands. The first 18 chapters contain notable stories including Rahab the prostitute and the Fall of Jericho, but the passage that stood out to me was the story of Achan in chapter 7. When the Lord delivered Jericho into the hands of the Israelites, it was commanded that everything other than the house of Rahab be completely destroyed, and that all silver, gold, bronze, and iron be brought into the Lord's treasury. Achan, seeing an easy opportunity to increase his own wealth, stole some of the plunder for himself. Shortly thereafter, because Achan had broken their covenant with the Lord, the Israelites were defeated in a "sure-win" battle. Progress continued, but not until Achan's sin was revealed and dealt with (via a flurry of stones).

Reading through this story made me start to think about my role in expanding God's territory. As a Christian, I profess my intentions as being selfless and for God's glory, but how often do my own egocentric desires get in the way of His work? How often do I excuse my own selfish and sinful behavior because "I'm having a bad day," or "I'm just really stressed right now," or "I'm young and dumb?" What are some ways that we can serve God and work to expand His territory, rather than being an Achan?

*-Craig Hodges*

 Weekly Schedule	 Elders	 World Missions
<b>Sunday</b> Worship 8:00 a.m. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Life Groups 6:00 p.m.	Bill Bell 463-1139 Joe Mathews 474-8369 Rick Swensen 463-6822 Don Vice 471-8653	Kevin Chambers World Christian Broadcasting Anchor Point, Alaska 99536
<b>Wednesday</b> Bible Study 7:00 p.m.	<b> Staff</b> <b>Ministers</b> Gilbert Kerrigan 418-3652 Lee Porter 463-6993 Phil Travis 447-2874 <b>Office</b> Sherry Marks, Manager 447-2874 Carol Bell, Secretary 447-2874	Loren and Penny Hollingsworth Phuket, Thailand 83000 E-mail: lholly54@yahoo.com  Bren and Cheryl White P.O. Box 245 New Market, MD 21774
 <b>Our Vision:</b> <b>Knowing Christ,</b> <b>Making Christ Known.</b>		

 **Elmwood**  
 CHURCH OF CHRIST  
 2501 Elmwood Ave., Lafayette, IN 47904  
 (765) 447-2874 (765) 447-0878 FAX  
 E-mail: office@elmwood-church.org  
 www.elmwood-church.org

Christian Student Center  
 PURDUE UNIVERSITY  
 115 Waldron Street  
 W. Lafayette, IN 47906

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