



Lithopolis United Methodist Church

Inviting people to be in relationship with Jesus and each other so that lives and communities are changed



LUMC 2018 Church Picnic at Slate Run Metro Park

A Church with a Mission

Charles Martindell

We have a mission. You may know what it is. Simply stated, our sense of God calling us to be a church in this place means we are trying to do something and we sum it up like this: *"Inviting people to be in relationship with Jesus and each other so lives and communities are changed"*.

When we are most effective, we consider this mission next to all our activities and plans. Beginning this month and continuing every few months, our Newsletter will take on a new appearance and focus. I've asked our Staff team to write stories about how we are living out the mission to which God has called us.

What you'll find inside:

- **Why Our Volunteers Serve**
- **A Conversation with Wretha**
- **The Bridge Ministry**
- **Rock City Ministry**
- **Disciple Now Youth Retreat**
- **Finance Focus**

"I hope everyone is blessed by being a part of a church with such an amazing, life-changing, community-changing, world-changing, mission!"

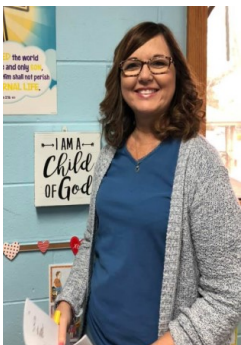
-Pastor Charles Martindell

I don't know exactly what to expect, but I think we'll be hearing about "inviting". I'm looking forward to some stories about how people's lives are being changed and even about how our community is being changed, all because of what happens when more and more people discover some things about God. Chief among that kind of discovering is that God's love is real. We believe that awareness changes lives as we experience a personal relationship with Jesus. We are "Inviting people to relationship with Jesus and each other so lives and communities are changed". I hope everyone is blessed by being part of a church with such an amazing, life-changing, community-changing, world-changing mission!



Volunteering in Rock City has enriched my life in so many ways. I enjoy teaching my class extra information they might not know about the Bible lesson. In return, the children in my class help me look at the lessons from a different point of view. They are full of energy and life. They like to learn and have fun. I really believe the following Bible Verse sums it up: Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." - Matthew 19:14. And, honestly that is where our church starts with the children; so, investing in their Bible education is an easy decision.

~ Elizabeth Jones



I'm a vessel through which I do good works for others. The children grow in their love and understanding of the Lord. That is fulfilling to me.

~ Melanie Gabriel

Spotlight on the Rock City Volunteers

Tiffany Jones

Lithopolis United Methodist Church is very blessed to have so many dedicated teachers, assistants, and substitutes for Rock City Kids' Ministry. Elizabeth Jones is the 9:00 am Rock City lead teacher. The children are always excited to read from the children's Bible during story time and cannot wait to end the lesson with the review games. Melanie Gabriel teaches the preschool group at the 10:30 am service upstairs in room 103. She does a puppet show with Theo the puppet every week in their theatre. The children enjoy singing songs with her each week. Val Hertlein has been the 1st and 2nd grade lead teacher for January and February during the 10:30 service. Val does an amazing job tying everything back to the main topic of the lesson and a highlight for the children is always snack! Sandy Tootle has come on as the main assistant for the class and is even willing to teach when needed! Barb Wood will be the lead teacher for this group at the beginning of March. She has been the assistant for the class and the whole Rock City craft leader since July. Thanks for your service Barb! Cindy Wilson is the lead teacher for the 3rd and 4th grade class at 10:30 am. She has endless amounts of patience and you will always see her with a smile! The youth in her class enjoy all of the creative games she comes up with, and you can hear giggles and laughs coming out of the classroom. Pam Bender is the main assistant for this classroom.

A big thank you to all of the substitutes who are willing to step in when needed! It would not be possible without your time and willingness to help!

Every Sunday, Rock City volunteers work hard preparing lessons for the children based on the sermon series so that the whole family receives the message. The children are sent home with weekly family connect pages with questions from the lesson they've talked about that morning. Lost your family connect page? Did you know that you can find it on the church website? It is under Connect, then Children, and scroll down to the for Parents section! Rock City will be following the upcoming *Renegade* sermon series for Lent too.

Volunteers wear identifying name badges and have all taken the Safe Sanctuaries training for the protection of the children in their care. There are always two adults in each classroom as well as a Good Shepherd roaming the halls. Children want to stay with you for worship? No problem, there are worship bags filled with activities provided. They are located in the Connection Center on a wooden coat tree. Please return them when finished so they can be used again the following week.



Volunteering with the children in Rock City has been a blessing to me for years. Children are incredibly innocent and effortlessly love and forgive. They are a reminder of how easy it is to have Christ-like hearts when we keep it simple!

~ Val Hertlein



To me, there is no greater responsibility than to help formulate children's faith development. I felt a strong calling to do this, despite a very obvious lack of experience, being neither a mother, nor a teacher, and I approached my first few times of teaching Rock City with much trepidation. However, it is now one of my great joys to be a part of Rock City, to get to know the children, and to experience their simple, yet often profound, understanding of the gospel.

~ Cindy Wilson



The Bridge

Dylan Kraner

About nine months ago, we started The Bridge, a Sunday morning ministry with middle school students that takes place during the 10:30 service. It has not only been a good and valuable experience for our young people but also for those who have been helping to lead this ministry. One of those leaders, Dylan Kraner, shares part of his story with us below...

I started regularly attending Lithopolis Methodist Church in March of 2018 when I was at my lowest of lows. Not only did I need, but I wanted something in my life to get me on a better path. It was during that time that I was told about Lithopolis Methodist Church, so I thought I would give it a try. The feeling I had after listening to the first couple of sermons was something I'll never forget. It was then that I felt grateful and knew this was exactly what I needed. You'll find me at the 10:30 service and I can confirm the band is awesome. I just feel blessed that I was told about the church because of how I look forward to going to the weekly service.

I've recently started helping with The Bridge ministry for the 5th-8th graders. I help lead the group once a month and it's awesome seeing kids engaging with other kids to learn about Jesus. I remember when I went to church around that age, and it was tough for me to understand the sermon sometimes. The Bridge class offers the opportunity of having the same message given but in a way that's more relatable to youth. It's great seeing all the kids in the class engaging and wanting to learn.



Thanks to Alex and Charles who contacted me several times during and after my recent surgery. Blessings to all at LUMC for their prayers, cards, and calls. As my son Kurt likes to remind me, I'm old and can't expect to bounce back as quick as I anticipated. Amen!

-Karol Kay Johnson



Disciple Now

Christina Albrecht

On January 15-17, students and leaders of Merge Student Ministries participated in the Disciple Now Masquerade! Thanks to the families that opened up their homes, students were able to enjoy a retreat setting all from the comfort of Lithopolis. We kicked off the weekend with talking about all of the different masks we wear for others. Paul in Romans 12:2 says, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” So frequently not just for teenagers, but for adults as well, we conform to this world by wearing a mask hiding our true selves. God gave us all our own gifts and talents; we all play a special role in this world. To show others that, we cut the strings off our masks and put the strings around the nails of the cross. With the pressure between school, sports, and social media this can be a hard thing to do! Please join us in praying for our students to have the courage to wake up every day and choose to be who God created them to be.

“I have often felt the need to wear masks in order to fit in. After attending the Disciple Now retreat, I realized that I don’t have to wear a mask and can just be myself.”

-Matthew Gavorcik, 6th grade



“During the Disciple Now retreat, I realized that I wear a mask a lot. I hide my real self from people who I am closest to. Ever since that weekend, I have tried to really be myself. That weekend showed me that as long as I have a connection with God, I don’t need to try to be someone I’m not. God made me the way I am for a reason!”

-Kaydence Neal, 7th grade

“We had an extraordinary time hosting high school and middle school girls during the Disciple Now retreat weekend! During their first night there, they experienced Extreme Hospitality when our neighbor (Lisa Carefoot) arrived with homemade cinnamon rolls for the girls. I had shared with Lisa that the girls would be at our home during the weekend, and her servant heart sought to share something unexpected with them. Our favorite times with the girls were sharing meals around the kitchen table. The girls became more comfortable and, by Saturday evening and Sunday morning, we were laughing and sharing stories around the table – like the church family that we want them to feel a part of! It was so much fun watching the girls DEVOUR cupcakes. Additionally, we saw the Holy Spirit at work as the older girls/mentors talked, laughed, and connected with the younger girls – something that we know will carry over into their lives for a long time.”

-Terri & John Colbert, hosts

It's All About the People – A Visit with Wretha Bowen

Steve Stanford

What is it that draws you into connection with Lithopolis United Methodist church? How has this church helped you with your spiritual journey? How have you impacted the life of this church?

While we don't often take time to consider these and other questions surrounding our faith and our daily walk with Christ, it can be helpful from time to time to consider them. We invite you to consider these and other questions about faith through the experiences of one of our own, **Wretha Bowen**.

On April 18, 2019 Wretha will celebrate 65 years of membership at Lithopolis United Methodist Church. As remarkable as that may seem, it is only the beginning to her story in the church.

Wretha has always been a Methodist. Born into farm life and attending Hopewell Methodist Church from birth until her marriage to her husband Richard, she is fond of quoting Garrison Keillor to explain what being a Methodist is all about. "We are known for our blandness, our excessive calm, our fear of giving offense, our lack of speed, and also for our secret fondness for macaroni and cheese". Lithopolis Methodist Church was Richard's church and when he married Wretha he took her away from the farm and brought her to the big city of Lithopolis. She was not a stranger to the town though, because she met Richard, through mutual friends, at the Lithopolis movie theater. Fun Facts from Wretha's 65 years at Lithopolis United Methodist Church:

- Most significant change? *The growth of the church both in terms of the building(s) AND the people.*
- What's remained mostly the same? *The people. The names have changed but the way people treat each other, like family, has remained the same over the years.*
- Ways you've served? *I ran Vacation Bible School ("Don't get any ideas Tiffany, those days are past!") I used to play the old pump organ for Sunday School and once for a wedding. And I've always sung in the choir.*
- Favorite hymn? *"This Is My Father's World" (When asked that question, Wretha spontaneously sang the first verse!)*
- Favorite Scripture? *Psalm 121: "I lift up my eyes to the hills— from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord..."*
- How many pastors have you seen come and go? *Too many to count!*
- Most helpful to you spiritually? *The people! We are family to each other- even working through conflict or disagreement helps us all grow.*
- Your own response to Christ? *That part is not done yet, it is something to work on continually. For me it is in accepting others as Christ would accept them, to treat others as Christ would.*



"I live a blessed life and the church has been a big part of that blessing."

-Wretha Bowen

Wretha Bowen, congratulations on your 65 years at Lithopolis United Methodist Church!

(For a more complete transcript of the interview with Wretha, please stop by the Connection Center.)



FINANCE FOCUS

Financial data thru January 31, 2019

Fund Balances

General	\$ 32,930
Building	\$ 47,303
Planned Replacement	\$ 108,353
Endowment	\$ 26,588
Other Designated Funds	\$ 58,596

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:7 NIV

General Fund Activity

Contributions to the General Fund pay for general operating expenses of the church including: music expense, payroll expense, office supply expense, parsonage maintenance and utilities, church maintenance and utilities, and apportionments.

General Fund	Jan-19	YTD 2019
Contributions	38,266	38,266
Expenses	49,724	49,724
Difference	(11,458)	(11,458)

- YTD 2019 General Fund contributions have decreased 14.7% compared to 2018.

Building Fund Activity

Building Fund Income for January 2019 = \$4,486

Other Designated Funds

Designated Funds are funds that are contributed to LUMC for a specific purpose. Some examples are: Different Kind of Christmas, Local Missions, Conference Special Offerings, Memorials, and Youth.

Questions or Comments? Contact Amy Bratton, LUMC Treasurer
amy@lithopolisumc.org or 614-271-6242

WE HAVE MOVED!



Looking for the Sunday Volunteer Schedule?

You can find it on our website:

www.LithopolisUMC.org/serve

Hard copies are also available at the Connection Center.