



## It's About Means, Not Ends

"A journey, not a destination." The life of Abraham looms so large in Genesis that it's sometimes hard to remember there are other folks whose story is told there also. His saga of faith has so many twists and turns—on every page readers can see themselves with all the twists and turns of their lives. An episode of great faith may be followed by a disappointing event that never lets us forget that this man, too, had feet of clay.

For all the enormity of the Abraham saga, however, at the end of the day we recall that the life of this man, as revered as he was and is, was a journey, not a destination. Cf. the New Testament writer,

By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, . . . For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (Hebrews 11:9-10)

"Stranger," "foreign country," "tents" – all these shout "temporary!" As important as Abraham was in the overall faith story of the Bible, he was really just a step, just one rung of the ladder, one piece of the puzzle.

So it is with all of us: we are not the whole picture, we are parts (albeit important parts) of the total picture. Neil Armstrong said the same thing as he reflected back on his work in the space program. What his life was about was not being the first man to walk on the moon. Instead, as he was quoted in *The New Yorker*,

What I attended to was the progressive development of flight machinery. My exploration came totally as a by-product of that. I flew to the moon not so much to go there but as part of developing the systems that would allow it to happen.

His life was about means, not ends.

Ditto the above for Christians in the body of Christ. Whatever I/you do in the kingdom of God, the point is not that deed, that accomplishment, that moment. The point is that we are links in the chain, a part of a process that will result in "Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known." Forget the accolades, throw off the titles, turn off the signs with our names in lights. Our lives are about means, not ends. The Lord himself said, "For I have come not to be served, but to serve." That's what it's about. G. Crowe

## An Ideal Family

The word "family" has a variety of connotations depending on the individual. It could conjure images of fun times and close friendship. But it could also remind a person of some not-so-good times or even abusive times.

The church is a family, but it certainly should not be acquainted with the latter description. In a very real way, the church is the ideal family. So instead of calling Elmwood our church family, maybe we should call it our true, one-of-a-kind, unique, ideal family. Because while biological families are based on the same bloodline, the church family is based on someone's else's blood. The bond that comes with this family of Christians is much stronger than any biological bond.

I remember sneaking around (I was a little devil growing up) trying to hide some of my mishaps (a kind word for what I did) from my parents. Although my parents loved me even in spite of my mishaps, I felt the need to hide these things and part of who I was from my family. But the church family is only accomplished through total exposure of oneself and others, so that hiding is not an option. Our Elmwood family accepts people for who they are and is willing to love them no matter what!

I don't know about you, but that sounds like an ideal family to me! A family where you are totally exposed, still loved, and encouraged to grow and change. I guess what I am trying to say is: welcome to Elmwood! That is who we are/need to be always. Looking forward to a new year of growth and loving relationships with my ideal family.

~Dan

## Prayer Concerns....

Doctors were able to attach the halo on Friday. **Natasha Risley** endures painful traction 6 hours a day until January 26 when she will have an 8-10 hour spinal surgery. She will be at the St. Louis Shriners' Hospital, 2001 S. Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63131-3597. Phone: 314-432-3600. Prayer hearts are available to pick up and put in a prominent place at home or work to remember to pray for her....**Doris Swensen** will have back surgery Monday, January 16, at St. Vincent's in Indianapolis....**Kay Tavana** will surgery on her left elbow January 20, at Home Hospital....**Rachel Eby**, 6-year-old daughter of Tara Eby and granddaughter of Andrea Browell, was recently diagnosed with juvenile diabetes....**Neta Guthery**, grandmother of Kristie Beeler, has been diagnosed with untreatable cancer....Continue praying for **Marie DeWoody, Annie Crowder, Diane Wolf, Sarah Watts, Jim Beghtol, Lucie Levy, Mark Eddy, Anna Dale, Eunice Whitesell, Ramona Farris, Irene Fox, Carrie High, and Delpha Allen.** Those in Rosewalk Village: **Paul & Ruth Marks, Minnie Scott, and Burnell Gulden.** Serving in Iraq: **Loren Sniffen** (*Armilda Follick's nephew just recently sent to Iraq*), **Dustin Holley, and Brad King.**

## Our Sympathies

Diagnosed last month with cancer throughout his body, longtime Elmwood member **Stan Newberry**, 71, died Tuesday, January 3, in Florida. In recent years Stan and Barb spent winters in Florida. Barb's address is 5435 Rattlesnake Hammock Rd., Naples, FL 34113. Phone: 239-732-0838. A memorial service is being held this Saturday, **January 14, 11:00 AM** at Elmwood. Our sympathies to Barb and daughters, Jennifer and Jill, and their families.

## Body Life Ministry Needs Volunteers

The Body Life Ministry needs volunteers to be "snow servants" this winter. Primarily a snow servant will volunteer his or her time to help our senior servants who cannot afford snow removal at their residences, or help someone just home from the hospital. If you are a high school student, a college student, a member of a LIFE group, or just someone who wants to help with this ministry opportunity, all you need is a snow shovel, a loving spirit, and the time to volunteer. If this interests you, call David Weckerly at 765-564- 4155.

## 2005 Food Pantry Report

	2005	2004
Numbers of families served	1,999	2,014
Number of adults	3,806	3,763
Number of children	2,230	2,439
Total Number of individuals served	6,136	6,202
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Purchases at FOOD FINDERS	\$4,185	\$4,021
Processing donated hogs to sausage	732	647
Other purchases	66	--
Total	\$4,983	\$4,668
Directed cash contributions	\$4,370	\$3,147
Paid from church general fund	\$ 613	\$1,521

This does not include the many pounds of food donated or the many hours of volunteers providing service to the pantry. It should be noted that in June we accepted over 50 new families for assistance. We knew we could not continue at this pace, so for the next 3 months we did not accept new families. We have resumed accepting new families but now taking only 5 new families per week or 20 per month. Even so, we served only 66 fewer individuals than in 2004.

-Mary Ella King



## A Baby Shower

Becky Pitt and Lisa Crowe are hosting a baby shower for **Chelsea Barnett & newborn daughter, Sophie.** It is planned for January 20, from 7:00 until 8:30 PM, at Becky and Chad's home, 630 Central Ave., Lafayette. Money for a cash gift may be given to Lisa Crowe or Becky Pitt.



The food pantry is in need of **cereal and soup.**



**The Elmwood Boys (Ben, Patrick, Josh and Andrew) will be singing at Elmwood Sunday night, 6:00, February 5.**

**January 8, 2006**  
 Class: 201 Worship: 361  
 Contribution: \$11,819  
 Budget: \$8,100

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## Midwest Leadership Training for Christ April 14-16, 2006

The theme for 2006 is **Take the Lead**. This theme is based on the following books: Joshua, Judges, Ruth. The 2006 convention will again be held on Easter weekend which is **April 14-16, 2006**. The 2006 MWLTC convention site is in Indianapolis! Marriott East, 7202 E. 21st. Street, Indianapolis, IN 46219 - phone: 317-322-3716 or 800-228-9290. Our kick-off meeting was this past Sunday and our new church coordinator for Elmwood, Barbara Tilley tells me that not many of you made the meeting. Never fear, it isn't too late. You can see Barb or me for the necessary paperwork or you can download the manual, etc., yourself at: [www.mwltc.org](http://www.mwltc.org). Cost for registration is only \$35 which includes all the plaques, plates, T-shirt, etc. You can turn in your registration form and your \$35 at any time. We must be registered and money turned in by February 20, but the sooner you get it in, the better it is for our Elmwood staff. **Parents and all third through twelfth graders**, please remember that this is one of the four events that all of the Elders and I strongly encourage, even expect you to be sure to be involved with. Of course, we would like for you to do everything you can in the youth ministry offerings, but LTC is one of the biggies. If you have questions, please let Barbara, Phyllis Simmerman, Sue McClain or me know. If finances are an issue, please let Bill Bell or me know. I did reserve a block of rooms at the Marriott East again this year, but they are first come, first served. If your family would like to stay at the hotel (I encourage you all to do so), please let me know soon. **ARTISTS**: please remember that you need to have your T-shirt design concepts turned in to Sharon by this Sunday, the 15<sup>th</sup>. The selected design gets a refund on your registration fees!

## ROCK SOLID – Winterfest 2006 Gatlinburg, TN – February 17-19

It is time to speak up! We have townhouses reserved for up to 36 people. To accommodate that number, a few may need to bring sleeping bags...don't be the last ones to sign up. In addition, we are seriously thinking of chartering a bus this year, but that could make the costs up to \$40 per person more. If you have a strong opinion either way, please let me know by this Sunday, the 15<sup>th</sup>. A \$50 deposit saves your place. By the way, Winterfest is another of the "big 4" for 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> graders. – Lee

## Your Elmwood Homework Assignment:

Don't forget to read chapter 29 in *The Purpose Driven Life*. If you don't have access to the book, that's OK, but you will gain a little more from the **SHAPE** classes beginning this week if you've read the chapter. All classes from teen on up start the **SHAPE** course this Sunday, January 15. If you haven't been attending a class, just drop into any adult class (they'll all be doing the same thing). If you don't know where to go, Jim Jones teaches the auditorium class and there's plenty of space there!

*Thank You!*

Dear Friends:

*Thank you for all your expressions of love and caring during this time. The calls, cards, visits, food at home and at the dinner after the Memorial Service, planters, and especially your prayers have been a great comfort to us.*

– The Lucas and Sutherlin Families

*To my church family,*

*Thanks for all the prayers, cards, phone calls, hugs, the planter, and support you gave me this past year. It was very difficult but you made it much easier. In Christian love,*

–Margaret Gustafson & Geneva's family

Ray Crowder, Executive Director of Shults Lewis Child and Family Services, wrote to thank Elmwood for our gift of \$9,440. He said our members' gifts are "allowing God's conspiracy of love and light to touch the lives of the children who need it most." Thanks to every person who made this amazingly generous gift possible.

A BIG THANK YOU to **Scott Baker** for mounting the televisions and DVD players in the classrooms in preparation for the SHAPE classes beginning this Sunday, January 15.

## Good \$ense Budget Class

Beginning Wednesday, January 18, and running for 7 weeks, the Good \$ense Budget Class, taught by Janet Boston and Brent Branstetter, will meet at 7:00 PM. The class is limited to 24 people. You may sign up in the Farris foyer. All questions can be directed to Janet at 477-7668, or Brent at 423-5650.

## Looking Ahead...

**Jan. 11, 7 PM**...Bible classes for all

**Jan. 15, 9:30 AM**..."SHAPE" CLASSES BEGIN

**Jan. 18, 7 PM**...Good \$ense Budget Class begins

**Jan. 20, 7:00-8:30 PM**...Baby Shower for Chelsea Barnett and daughter, Sophie, at Becky & Chad Pitt's home

*Read:*  
Exodus 11-25  
Psalms 12-18:27

# 2006 Spiritual Adventure

## Week 4: January 22-28

When I lived in a small town in Missouri, every January the editor of the local newspaper would launch a campaign calling for the elimination of the month of February from the calendar. There were several supporting reasons that he gave, such as being a short month anyway, too much cold and snow, no major holidays, etc. There would, of course, be opposition from those with February birthdays, anniversaries and other remembrances.

I am reminded of this as I read the passage for this week. In the twelfth chapter of Exodus, God tells Moses and Aaron that he is going to change the Israelites' calendar. As I think about this event, I see God providing an opportunity for his people to get a fresh start in life and in their relationship with him. For them, this new beginning meant deliverance from bondage and a change in the way they interacted with God. As explained in verses 14-20, with this new beginning there were some things that God required them to do in celebrating and remembering this event.

I see a parallel in this to our lives today. When we are baptized into Christ, God says to us the same thing he said to the Israelites. Forget the past. You have a new start (Romans 6:4). Our new beginning also comes with some things that we must do in celebration and remembrance. Thankfully, these are not harsh or burdensome. Perhaps the hardest thing God asks of us is given in Matthew 22. If we are to enjoy the new beginning God has given us, we must LOVE.

If we have this Christ-like love, then every day of the year will be a new beginning. We enter each day looking for every opportunity to show this love to others and to God.

Now if we could just figure out what to do about February.

—Joe Mathews

 <i>Weekly Schedule</i>	 <i>Elders</i>	 <i>World Missions</i>
<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. <b>Wednesday</b> Bible Study 7:00 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 99556  Loren and Penny Hollingsworth Phuket, Thailand 83000
Elmwood Nursery School & Pre-K Preschool: Tues-Thurs 9-11:30 am Pre-K: Mon-Thurs 9-11:30 am Director, Susan McClain 447-2874	 <i>Staff</i>  <b>Ministers</b> Gayle Crowe 447-6940 Lee Porter 463-6993 Dan Cooke 543-7469 <b>Office Manager</b> Sherry Marks 447-2874	City of Children Ensenada, Mexico  Bren and Cheryl White P.O. Box 245 New Market, MD 21774

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