



## The Freshness of the Spirit

One day last spring, Ben Johnson took his car in for repairs. There was nothing major to be done, so he decided to wait for it. While he was killing time he ambled next door to browse through the showroom of new cars. His car was about four years old now, so it had been some time since he had been in a showroom. How those new cars did shine! He looked at this, and that, and that – all improvements over his car. “Well,” he thought, “someday, maybe . . . but my car’s just fine!”

By this time his repair job was completed. He went back, paid the bill, and started toward his car. Much to his surprise, an amazing transformation had taken place in his car. Suddenly it looked old fashioned. He saw dents, scratches. How strange it was: just that morning it had looked great to him; how could it age so fast?

That’s the way it is when something new comes along. By comparison, the old looks shabby and worn. The old looks different once the new has come.

What Jesus Christ came bringing was “new” in lots of ways, but among those ways was the fact that God promised to personally indwell each and every believer with his Spirit. And as proof of that indwelling, each believer is given one or more gifts, spiritual gifts, to use for the edification and upbuilding of the body as a whole. This news was so “new” that in Paul’s letters to the churches he devoted long sections to explaining it (Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, 14, Ephesians 4). Of course, God can and does work through the natural talents people are born with. But whether we fully understand how it works or not, we believe Paul meant what he said when he said, “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good” and then he gave examples of specific gifts given to individual Christians.

You don’t fully understand? Welcome to the club! In John 3, Jesus said the Spirit is like that—we see evidence of his work, but we can’t always pinpoint his every movement to satisfy our curiosity. The newness of the Spirit’s work in the life of individual believers is at the heart of who we are and what our faith is about. By contrast, anything else looks shabby and worn. *G. Crowe*

## Spring Non-Break

I want you to know about your students. This last week, 13 of us went to Louisiana and did hurricane relief work. I really wish you could have seen these students work. They were amazing. Every student really chipped in and worked hard. I was very proud of them! No one that went had a bad attitude, and everyone knew why we were there. I was really impressed with their work. Again, if you see Jimmy Huff, please thank him for putting such a wonderful trip together.

Driving away from Louisiana, there were many results: 140 pieces of drywall had been put up, two houses had insulation installed, windows installed, seemingly endless brush and trees had been cleared, and all who went grew closer together.

For the record, the trip was \$100 a student for the week. We had 13 people go, but we had raised \$1,926. Some students simply donated money and did not go. In addition, we raised \$141 from your help with our bake sale. Thank you! The result is that we will be sending the relief workers an additional amount of almost \$800 to help them in their efforts.

God is good and he has used these students in marvelous ways this last week. Thank you for all of your help and your prayer during our mission effort. *~Dan*



**Ramona Farris'** fragile health is rapidly declining....**Phyllis Simmerman** had knee replacement surgery on Friday. She is at home recuperating....**Edith McCoy** was hospitalized for a few days last week. She is now recuperating at home....Jack and Sue McCoy's grandson, **Kaden Koebcke** is up to 5 pounds 3 ounces! He remains at Riley NICU, but is improving. Their other infant grandson, **Noah Powlen**, was able to go home last week! Praise God! Sue will travel to Pasadena next week to assist Jenna and Craig with their two babies....**Willard Farmer** is scheduled for surgery for cancer this Wednesday, March 22 at Home Hospital....Continue praying for **Natasha Risley, Amber Tolle** (*difficult pregnancy*), **Phyllis Gray** (*in University Place undergoing rehab*), **Kyra Wilson** (*3-year-old recovering from acute influenza*), **Ryan Woolard** (*friend of Seth Mullen who has severe respiratory problems*), **Mark Eddy, Marie DeWoody, Anna Dale, Ramona Farris, Delpha Allen, Carrie High** (*Regency Place Nursing Home*), and **Irene Fox** (*George Davis Manor Nursing Home*). Those in Rosewalk Village: **Paul & Ruth Marks, Minnie Scott, and Burnell Gulden.**

Serving in Iraq: **Jon Kiefner, Loren Sniffen, and Brad King.**

## A note of thanks....



*(The following letter was received last week in response to the \$9,440 check that Elmwood sent to Shults-Lewis for their milk fund for the year. Thanks to all who responded to this special need.)*

Dear Members of the Elmwood Church of Christ,

At the end of December, Shults-Lewis received a very generous gift from the Elmwood Church of Christ for the purchase of milk for the children at Shults-Lewis. The gift was so generous, I laughed that we could probably buy a herd of milk cows. Your congregation poured out the love of the Lord on the children and families served by this ministry. You have greeted our message of the good works being done by Christians at Shults-Lewis with love, prayers and financial support, all of which the Lord continues to use in great and powerful ways.

Two weeks ago, two of the young ladies residing at Shults-Lewis made a decision after studying the Bible for several months to give their lives to God through Christ. That's right, they were baptized. Praise God for the increase!

I thank you for allowing yourselves to be instruments of His work.

In His service

Ray Crowder, Executive Director



Food  
Pantry  
Needs

The food pantry is in need of  
**canned vegetables and  
beans.**



Be sure to wish **Sam & Sara Postlethwait** a happy anniversary this Wednesday, March 22. They will celebrate **65 years** of marriage! Congratulations!



Purdue graduate student, **Ernest Nyannor**, and **Angela Darko**, who is an MD now in residency in Newark, New Jersey, were married by Gayle Crowe on March 11 in Wilmington, Delaware. Angela will be able to visit Elmwood in the near future. See Lisa Crowe or Susan Huff if you are interested in contributing to a cash gift to be presented to them.

## LUM Meal Providers

Serving dinner at Lafayette Urban Ministry next Monday night will be: **Sue McClain, Peggy Linback, Jim Levick, and Yssa DeWoody.**

**March 19, 2006**

Class: 223 Worship: 284

Contribution: \$5,738

Budget: \$8,100



**Phil Travis**  
**Youth Ministry Intern**



Hi! My name, as you may know, is Phil Travis. I am so excited to get to know and begin working with you all. I would like to take this time to tell you a little about myself, so you know what you have gotten yourself into! I am a 21-year-old Junior at Rochester College. I serve as a

Campus Ministry Intern for the school, planning all of the on-campus devotionals that are held by the Campus Ministry office. I work part-time and go to school full-time during the school year. I come from a large family (5 siblings!) and wouldn't want it any other way. I like to read, anything from science fiction and fantasy novels, to theological journals. I really like working on computers, and I have built my own from the ground up, I also work in the college's IT department. I like to play video games. I really like music - listening to it, singing, anything, from Handel and Bach to Keith Urban and Relient K; music is a large part of my life. I like playing sports...but I'm in no way shape or form any good at most of them! I really like movies, especially to pick them apart and digest them, and find out what they are really saying and what we can take from them. I would like to thank you all for giving me this opportunity to learn more about Youth Ministry, and giving me experience in your church. I have heard great things about your congregation and am excited for summer to get here. See you in May! - Phil Travis

Phil's current plans are to arrive in Lafayette sometime in the afternoon/early evening on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May. Our hope is that we will have some kind of informal reception (punch and cookies, maybe?) so that you can meet Phil and so he can meet some of you. He will be with us till August 9. Phil comes very highly recommended by all. We have talked to adults "back home," staff at Rochester College, as well as current and past students. Please be praying for Phil as he makes preparations to come this way. I want to thank you all again for being supportive of this very important aspect of youth ministry - for Elmwood, and for the brotherhood at large. Don't forget we need places for Phil to stay and we will need to provide some healthy meals, too. If you would like to send him a greeting/welcome, you can write him at [ptravis@rc.edu](mailto:ptravis@rc.edu).

- Lee

## New Directory Pictures to be taken in April



Elmwood is shooting a new pictorial directory, and we need everyone to participate. A photo studio will be set up at the church building on **April 14, 15, 25 and 26** (Friday, Saturday, Tuesday and Wednesday). Every participating family gets a **free directory and 8 x 10 picture**. **There is no cost to the church and you are not obligated by high pressure sales to buy any pictures.** There will be sign-up sheets available in the Farris foyer and the A-2 fellowship room this Sunday from 9:00 until 9:30 AM and 10:15 to 10:45 AM.

## Upcoming Sunday Night Schedule

Mar. 26, & April 2	LIFE Groups
April 9	Leadership Training for Christ Preview
April 16	High School Graduation
April 23, 30	LIFE Groups

## Let's Start Talking Team goes to Fiji

For the sixth time, Elmwood is sending a team of Let's Start Talking workers to teach Jesus using English conversation. This year, the team will be sent to Suva, Fiji. The team includes Josh, Gina, and Kinley Boyd; Ryan and Stephanie Middleton; and Alison Ruhl. The team will leave for Fiji in mid-June and will spend 6 weeks sharing Jesus and their faith. Please pray for all the team members as they prepare. If you'd like to contribute to the project, see Josh Boyd or go online to <http://lst.kintera.org/2006projects/purdue>, where you can contribute to individual members or click on "general team donation" for your gift to be used by whoever needs it most.



**March 22, 6:00 PM...**Small Group Singing practice; Jr. Puppet team at **6:30 PM**; Puppet team #2 at **7:00 PM**, and Puppet team #3 at **7:30 PM**.

**March 22, 7 PM...**Bible classes for all

**April 9, 6 PM...**Leadership Training for Christ Preview

**April 16, 6 PM...**High School Graduation service

*Read:*  
Joshua 9-22;  
Psalms 49-55

# 2006 Spiritual Adventure

## Week 14: April 2-8

As I read the scripture, I couldn't get past the thought of living so far away from God. It is easy to be distracted by the society that we live in. Many call themselves Christians and try to live true to their word. However, many fail. I can't start to tell of how I've failed. There is more to being a Christian than to go to church and worship God and enjoy each other's fellowship, go to class and learn more about God and His word. We are to walk the walk rather than just talking the talk. God wants us to be steadfast through all that life can throw at us. He wants us to walk with Him and not get separated when we see something better that will only take us further from God. People always talk the talk, if you will, but do they mean it? Actions speak louder than words.

Those that are lost are only falling deeper, sliding into the shadows. When I sit in my classes there are those that I can see that are living their lives far away from God. Then there are those that say they are walking close with God. Through history our faith in God has been tested by the death and destruction that has happened that separates us and tests our faith in Him, but throughout, many have been able to stay close to God.

While I've been writing, I have been thinking of a song that was written by a man that had lived his life far away from God and was realizing it. In his life, he had made many mistakes that many make. I love that song because it reminds me that we are far from what God would want us to be. Life's pain steers us from our wanted destination, but we are to redirect the pain to make us stronger, rock solid, firm, and closer to Him. So how do we get there? We all need to ask ourselves that question. In time, our prayers may be answered. Are you close to Him like he wants you to be? How close are we?

**-Daniel Cable**



# **This Week's Highlight: What About Reincarnation?**

A gracEmail subscriber writes: *"I tend to think that the soul breathed into my body pre-existed me and that I had demonstrated a disposition to follow God before as I do now. Perhaps that is why I was predestined to serve God in this life. I would appreciate your comment if you have time."*

The notion of pre-existing and reincarnated souls is a popular but ancient explanation of why good and bad things happen to people during this life and why it is important to do good and not evil while we live. Thousands of years before Christ, the Egyptians and Babylonians both believed that the body is but a temporary shell housing a pre-existent and immortal soul or spirit which might later revisit the earth in another person. Hinduism popularized the same ideas in India about two centuries before Christ. Some 1,500 years later, an impersonal version of the same general thought was incorporated into the fledgling Buddhist tradition. Meanwhile, the Greek philosopher Pythagoras of Samos also taught reincarnation, as Plato did in Athens some two centuries afterward.

In early Christianity, esoteric teachers known as Gnostics taught the pre-existence and reincarnation of immortal souls. The Christian leadership, grounded in the Jewish Scriptures and apostolic teaching, soundly rejected gnosticism as heresy and outside the limits of orthodox teaching. These ancient pagan beliefs reappear today in most New Age philosophy and in such neo-gnostic groups as the Rosicrucians and Theosophists. Although the notions of reincarnation and immortal souls are tantalizing and very old, they are quite different from the revelation contained in the Bible.

The Bible tells us that humans (and everything that exists except God himself) are created, not eternal, and that we did not exist until God made us. In the Bible, "spirit" usually means breath, although it sometimes refers to humans viewed in their inner, intangible self. "Soul" in the Bible normally stands for a whole living person, not an immortal interior part that inhabits but survives the body. Our hope for future life is not reincarnation but resurrection in a glorified and (then) immortal or deathless body suited for new heavens and new earth. This life is a one-time affair. It is appointed to humans to live once, die and eventually to face the Creator to give account (Hebrews 9:27).

The person who understands that we are created by God, redeemed by Jesus Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit to be made immortal with a glorified body when Jesus comes again has every incentive to live rightly now. These biblical truths provide strong hope for personal bodily life forever with others in a perfect universe, something no concept of reincarnation of immortal souls can possibly match.

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# The Lord's Work

*A heartwarming and faith-affirming essay by Indiana minister, Kent Ellett.*

**"No good work is half so good as really being physically and emotionally present for your family."**

# **Telephone Directory for**



## **Elmwood Church of Christ**

*2501 Elmwood Avenue, Lafayette 47904*

*447-2874 FAX:447-0878*

*E-mail: office@elmwood-church.org*

*elmchurch@aol.com*

## **Christian Student Center**

*115 Waldron, West Lafayette 47906*

*Office: 743-0954 Student Lounge: 743-3207*

*Home Hospital: 447-6811*

*St. Elizabeth Hospital: 423-6176*

**March 15, 2006**