

The Linden Letter

June, 2009

My brothers and sisters in Christ:

Hiccup, Hiccup, Hiccup...oh no!! My car was doing it again!! Jerking along the road reminding me that it wasn't feeling well and something needed to be done--fast. Hiccup!!! After a quick amateur diagnosis, I concluded that one of two things was occurring ... either my spark plugs needed to be changed or my fuel filter was clogged. I took the less expensive, easier route first. One trip to Salvo and one bottle of GUMOUT later and my car was running smoothly again.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if our spiritual lives could be fixed that easily? We feel ourselves lagging in zeal for the things of God so we grab a bottle of Holy Oil, chug it down and, ahhh...our lives begin to run smoothly again. A conflict occurs between members of our church and all we have to do is give a shot glass full of Healing Balm to each member of the Administrative Council and, voila, problem solved. (Hiccup!!)

Unfortunately our individual spiritual maladies cannot be healed that easily and no such quick fix exists for the church either.

Ephesus was a large city with a large church. The Apostle Paul was the founding pastor and he was followed by his protégé Timothy. A long time member of the church was Mary, the Mother of Jesus who came with John the Apostle. When it came to serving God they were a well oiled machine, an active church with a full range of programs for all ages. But somewhere along the way, they started hiccupping. In Revelation 2:3-4 we hear a diagnosis of their malady: *"You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first."*

Obviously, this church had been doing some things very well. They shared the Good News in both word and deed and endured many hardships in the name of Jesus. *But*, says Jesus, (*hiccup*) you don't love me the way you used to love me. We do not know what happened to those folks in Ephesus to make them lose their first love for God but we DO know a few of the things that clog up our spiritual lives: stress, busyness, unclear boundaries, unhealthy conflict, trying to please all of the people all of the time, etc. (hiccup, hiccup, hiccup!!)

Perhaps we (individually and corporately) would do well to use the summer months to drink deeply of Jesus' words to his church.

Remember: Take the greatest love you have ever known and multiply it by billions and you will have something approaching the love that God has for you and for our church. Have we fully embraced God's love for us? Are we expressing the same love for ALL God's people?

Repent: During this past year have you/ we grown in knowledge and love of God? Have you/we shown radical hospitality to both friends and strangers in our church? Have you/we served others? Reflecting on these types of questions can help us to discern if we need to ask God to forgive us and help us to move in a different direction.

Renew: Renew yourself weekly with worship and daily with prayer. Find time to be still and know that God is God and you are not!!

Jesus knows the challenges that we face. Jesus knows that we work hard to serve and care for our families and for our Christian Community. Jesus knows that we are weary. But let us never forget our first love or we may find ourselves needing more than a simple repair.

In God's peace,

Karen

June Highlights

Sunday, June 7	9:15 AM	Last Day of Sunday School/ Pancake Breakfast (No Family First Sunday)
Sunday, June 14	10:30 AM	Combined Service – Choir Celebration Sunday with reception following
Wednesday, June 17	7:00 PM	Healing Service
Friday, June 19	6:30 PM	Choir Dinner
Sunday, June 21	10:30 AM	Combined Service – Vacation Bible School Kick-off Compassion Organization Presentation Father’s Day
Monday, June 22 – Friday, June 29	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Vacation Bible School
Sunday, June 28	10:30 AM	Combined Service Followed by Church Picnic

Summer Worship Times Beginning July 5

Informal Service - 9:15 AM Traditional Service - 10:30 AM

Baltimore County Christian Workcamp

The Baltimore County Christian Workcamp is a great opportunity to share the love of Christ and give back to our community. Each year, since 1984 the Baltimore County Christian Workcamp improves homes and provides assistance for limited income families in Baltimore County. This year the program runs from July 19th to the 24th. The deadline for applying is July 1st. Volunteers don't have to work the entire

week. You can work as many days during that week as you want.

Some of the projects completed in the past include building ramps, repairing/replacing floors, ceilings, kitchen cabinets, tubs, sinks, faucets, handicap bathrooms, air conditioners, stoves, refrigerators, washers, dryers, railings, doors, weather stripping, insulation, caulking, yard work, cleaning, plumbing, and electrical repairs. Last year over 200 people participated either in preparation of meals, support services, or directly at the job site. The range of ages was from 10 to over 80.

Food is provided. Breakfast is served at the Hunts Memorial UMC (Joppa Rd at Old Court Road). You prepare your own lunch and take it to the jobsite and go to one of the participating local churches for dinner.

Registration forms are in an envelope on the bulletin board in the back of the church. If you want to participate, please complete the registration form and put in the completed forms envelope also on the bulletin board or give to Jim Hedgespeth. Please don't mail it to the address on the application because the Linden Heights mission committee will pay the \$6 a day or \$25 per week donation fee. Linden Heights also contributes at least \$100 for materials. If you can't participate, but you would like to help financially you can put a monetary contribution in the mission offering envelope and write on the envelope Balto County Christian Workcamp and it will go directly to this program.

Thanks for considering this opportunity to help people right here in this community. If you have any questions don't hesitate to call Jim Hedgespeth at 410-493-7569.



Sunday School Year-End Celebration

Our annual Sunday school breakfast will be held on June 7, at 9:15 AM in the Fellowship Hall. Come join your teachers to celebrate all you have learned this past year. There will be a time of sharing

after breakfast. Thanks to all of our teachers and to Ruth Snyder, our Sunday school superintendent, for their dedication to our children.

Sunday school will resume in September.

Food Box

The Mission Committee has placed a box near the entrance to the church where non-perishable food can be placed for distribution to various food pantries and soup kitchens. The first collection will go to the Parkville Carney Assistance Network (PCAN). Donated food to PCAN goes to help people directly in our neighborhood. There has been a dramatic increase in food needed to feed the hungry. It is an ongoing concern, especially in this poor economy. So why not bring something in on your way to church each Sunday and drop it in the box. It will be greatly appreciated.

- Jim Hedgespeth

When He Comes, What Will He Find?

In Revelation 1:19, John is commanded by Jesus to write seven letters to the seven churches of his time. If anyone doubts whether or not God cares about our church I suggest you read these seven letters, Revelation 2:1 – 3:14.

In these letters, God knows all the churches and what is happening in each of them. In every letter Jesus told John to write about specific people, places and events. God praised the believers for their successes and told them how to correct their failures. It was interesting to me that God had only one church, Smyrna, where there was nothing

negative to say. Just as Jesus cared for each of these churches he cares for our church. He wants it to reach its greatest potential. The group of believers with whom we worship and serve is God's vehicle for changing the world.

When Jesus comes, which of these churches will he see in ours?

We need to remember our church is really His Church. Take this seriously – God does!

“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”

Rev. 22:12-13

- Jeff Lawrence



Our Graduates

Our best wishes to all of the “2009” graduates as they take the next step on life's journey.

Greg Singer graduated on May 21 from Salisbury University with a Degree in History with a Concentration in Secondary Education. Greg plans on teaching History in the fall.

Jackie Conrad graduated from Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania on May 10 with a Degree in Political Science. Jackie will be pursuing her Master's Degree at Lehigh University this fall.

Alyson Yantis graduated from Towson University on May 22 with a Degree in Early Childhood Education. She hopes to have a teaching job in Baltimore County in September.

Shea Lawson will be graduating from the Baltimore School for the Arts on June 7, 2009. She will be attending The Johns Hopkins University in the fall majoring in Engineering with a possible minor in Film Studies.

Kristen Zimmerman graduated from Virginia Tech on May 16 with a Degree in Engineering. Kristen will be working at Virginia Tech this fall doing research for the University.

Cody Masters graduates from Perry Hall High School on May 29. Cody has been and will continue to attend CCBC in hopes of transferring to UMBC to obtain an Engineering Degree, after completing required course work there. He continues to work at Outback Steakhouse in Perry Hall, hopefully becoming a server this summer.

Jessica Hardesty will be graduating from the Baltimore School of the Arts on June 7, 2009. Jessie will be attending Shenandoah University in Virginia in the fall.

Lucrisa Bender's granddaughter, Rebecca Bielski will be graduating from Mercy High School on June 3. Rebecca will be attending Salisbury University in the fall.

Jackie Burke's son, David R Burke, received his Master's Degree from Goldey-Beacom College on May 1. David is an inspirational speaker within the United Methodist Church.

AUDITOR NEEDED

The Finance Committee is looking for volunteer to perform this year's audit of the church's accounting books. You do not need to be an accountant to perform this task. Please contact the church office if you are interested in helping. Thank you



The final event in Linden Heights' year-long music celebration will be a

choir celebration service, held on Sunday, June 14th at 10:30 a.m. (Please note: there will only be one service that day). Make sure you plan to attend this service, packed with old and new anthems, handbell music, great hymns and a combined praise song with Dan O'Neil. I look forward to seeing you at this worship service. "And may God give us faith to sing always: Alleluia!" (UMH p. 68)

-Gary Van Essen

Vacation Bible School

"Camp E.D.G.E.," where our children will **Experience and Discover God** Everywhere, is scheduled for the week of June 22 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. On Sunday, June 21 we will have a VBS Kick-Off Day with one combined service at 10:30 AM. Registration papers were sent home through Sunday school but can also be found on the narthex table, in the church office or you can register on line at <http://cokeburyvbs.com/lindenheightsvbs/ce>.

VBS classes are for children ages preschool (currently attending a pre-school program) through fourth grade.

The cost is \$10 per child or \$20 per family. This donation pays for teaching materials and craft supplies.

We will have a Kick-off Sunday on June 21. There is only one combined service this day at 10:30 AM.

OFFICE HOURS DURING VBS

During the week of June 22, Pastor Karen and I will be helping with Vacation Bible School in the mornings and working in the afternoons. If you need to contact either of us any time during that week, please leave a message on the answering machine and we will get back to you. Thank you.

- Debbie Singer

Compassion International

On Sunday, June 21 we will have a guest speaker, Sherry Disheroon, talking to us about Compassion, an organization committed to releasing children from poverty in Jesus' name, working hand in hand with the local church, both in this country and around the world.

For millions of children in developing nations, the daily struggle for survival takes priority over going to school, playing games with friends, or making plans for the future. Tragically, poverty is robbing millions of hope. Children are the hardest hit by poverty and have the fewest resources available to change their circumstances. Scripture tells us in Psalm 82:3-4 "Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy."

Come and learn what you can do to help.

Just a Reminder –

Family First Sundays will resume in the fall. Beginning in July, we will have cookies and lemonade following each service.



Combined Outdoor Service And Church Picnic

On June 28, we are having a combined worship service at 10:30 AM, followed by the annual church picnic. The church will be supplying hotdogs, rolls and drinks. Please bring a salad or dessert to share. There will be a moon bounce and water slide for the children. Look for the sign-up sheet in the narthex.



Linden Heights had 6 youth join our church family on May 31 through their profession of faith.

*Justin Ahmer
Evan Cammarata
Gabriel Coleman
Delaney Davis Hagy
Grayson Osborn
Sarah Walters*

Congratulations to our newest church members!

Wednesday Night Prayer And Healing Group

**A New 8 Week Prayer Study to Start on
Wednesday, May 27, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.**

HEART OF HEALING, HEART OF LIGHT
Flora Slosson Wuellner

**This study is great for anybody who
wants to make Jesus more real to
them.**

Strongly grounded in scripture, *Heart of Healing, Heart of Light* explores the problems and blocks we experience as we seek to trust God's love and respond to it.

Organized into 8 chapters averaging 12 pages in length, this practical book ... works with our abused ability to trust

- the infected anger that is not yet able to cleanse
- the fatigue and draining we experience as we try to give and to love
- that strange feeling of God's absence that sometimes overcomes us.

Class Location: the Parlor

**Order your book before class starts
from Amazon.com.**

Questions: Call Alicia McBride, 410-668-0392.

Some Sanctuary Reminders

Nursery care is provided during both services in the education building. If you have a young child who does not do well in the nursery, the service can be heard in the parlor and the fellowship hall.

If you have any difficulty sitting in the pews, feel free to sit in the parlor in a more comfortable chair.

Anyone turning out the lights needs to be sure you hear the “click” of the switches or they are not completely turned off. The light around the cross should only be turned to the half way point. Make sure all doors are locked if you are the last person in the church. Thank you.

Pastor Karen at Annual Conference

Pastor Karen will be attending the Annual Conference from June 3-6, 2009 along with the other pastors in our region. If a pastoral emergency arises, please call Pastor Karen's cell phone at 410-812-1338.



**World
Missions**

**Dear Missions
Committee &
Linden Heights
Congregation,**

Thanks so much for your support of my mission trip to Costa Rica! It was amazing. Not only did I get to help the people of La Paz, but I also got the privilege of experiencing an entirely different culture than our own. We got to talk about God with the families we stayed with and did daily devotions. My group also got to be witnesses for God when we worked and while we played. While I was there we worked with the children in orphanages, the elementary schools, and one bilingual high school. We played games with the children while teaching them some English. The high school experience was...interesting! They definitely do things differently in Costa Rica than we do in the United States! My

group worked on painting a retaining wall at the village cemetery, the wrought iron gate and the viewing building used during funeral services. We also painted a school that really needed a lot of repair that our handy men took care of. The only bad part about my week was leaving! We all grew so close to the people and families we lived with. The people of La Paz are hard working. They, however, have to work everyday to make a living for their families. This leaves no time to repair their village and even their own houses at times. There was so much to be done and so much more help to give. The Costa Ricans, or Ticos, always greet each other and my group while we were there, with the phrase ‘pura vida’ and ‘adios mio’. This means pure life and ‘praise God!’ They are a group of believers with faith I learned from. I hope to go back next year so I can continue God’s work in La Paz, Costa Rica. I honestly could not have made it without your prayers and support. Thank you for making it possible.

Love,
Katherine McBride

Trustees’ Request

Recently, some children have been playing the piano in the sanctuary which can cause the piano to get out of tune quickly. This costs our church, and its members involved with maintaining it, valuable time and money. We request that usage be limited to skilled players only.

The playground equipment adjacent to the parking lot and behind the parsonage was constructed for use exclusively by the Linden Bridge Nursery. The facilities do not belong to Linden Heights’ church. For safety and liability reasons, the facility is to be used only under the

supervision of Nursery school staff. It is to remain locked and inaccessible at all other times. Please help us comply.

Thanks for your support - Trustees



Prayer Vigil

Linden Heights is having a mini prayer vigil on June 12 from 7:00 – 9:00 PM in the

sanctuary. If you have a specific prayer request, please fill out one of the note cards on the narthex table.

Financial Information

For the month of April:

Operating Expenses:

Income	\$21,562.00
Expenses	<u>17,244.63</u>
Net	4,317.37

Building Fund

Income	\$ 4662.00
Mortgage	<u>2,314.89</u>
Net	2346.11

Balance remaining on mortgage as of

4/30/09	\$26,653.24
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Please remember your tithes and offerings during the summer months.

Community News

Hiss UMC is sponsoring a trip to the Washington National Cathedral on August 12, 2009. The day will include a guided tour of the Cathedral, High Tea in the Tower of the Cathedral, round trip transportation, taxes and included meal gratuities. There will also be some time to visit the gift shop. The cost is \$49.00

per person. A detailed flyer is on the bulletin board in the breezeway. For information and reservations, contact Marian Holmes, 410-661-0299.



Many thanks to the Tuesday Night Men's Bible Study for thinking of all the Linden Heights' mothers. The Mother's Day carnations were a lovely addition to the service. Thank you for thinking of us.

Debbie Singer

Prayer Chain

Linden Heights' Prayer Chain is looking for persons who would like to pray for others facing crisis or hardship. The Prayer Chain provides a meaningful way to experience prayer both as individuals and as a church. It doesn't require much time, and it can be done at each person's convenience from home or work.

Why should you consider joining the prayer chain? For at least three reasons:

1. Jesus regularly prayed.
(Mark 1:35)
2. Jesus told us to pray.
(Matthew 7:7)
3. Prayer strengthens our spiritual connection to God.
(Jeremiah 29:13)

If you would like to join our prayer chain or simply want to learn more about it, please contact Cheré Smell at 410-882-2890.

Safe Sanctuary

Matthew 18:5-7 (J. B. Phillips) says:
Anyone who welcomes one child like this for my sake is welcoming me. But if anyone leads astray one of these little children who believe in me he would be better off thrown into the depths of the sea with a mill-stone hung round his neck! Alas for the world with its pitfalls! In the nature of things there must be pitfalls, yet alas for the man who is responsible for them!

The Administrative Council approved a Safe Sanctuary policy at their May 13th meeting. The policy will go into effect this coming September starting with the 2009/2010 school year.

The development of a written policy has been encouraged by Baltimore-Washington Conference (BWC) leaders. Members of Linden Heights have been following this effort for well over a year, attending seminars, reviewing similar policies from other churches and reviewing materials available through the BWC (see their web-site). The problem is real - you've no doubt heard or read about incidents locally and nationally. Some sources indicate that over 3 Million incidents of Child Abuse are reported every year. Unfortunately, those perpetrating abuse look just like you and me. On the other hand, some of the reported incidents turn out to be unfounded.

What a challenge! Those involved in developing and approving this formal policy find it regrettable that a policy statement is required but accept that it is necessary in today's world. We trust that you will concur. We will need the continuous support and cooperation of all church members to be successful as a

congregation serving our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Linden Heights, or any church, should be a place where everyone feels welcome and safe, especially our children and youth. In her pamphlet **Safe Sanctuaries, Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church**, Joy Thornburg Melton says "While a church cannot guarantee the safety of every person, every church can be responsible for reducing and eliminating circumstances that could lead to harm or injury." With this in mind, the policy developed for Linden Heights is intended to:

1. Identify safeguards for children and youth participating in church sponsored activities against inappropriate behavior by adults who supervise them.
2. Protect the church, its leaders, staff, and volunteers if allegations of inappropriate behavior are brought against them.

The policy statement covers Preventive Measures including Student Registration, Volunteer Applications and Questionnaires, Background Check Permission, Reference Feedback, Causes for Concern, Ensuring Driver Responsibility, Discipline, Parent or Guardian Policies, 'Open doors' to Classrooms, Parental Permission Slips for church related activities outside the classroom, as well as, Training, Administration, etc. The policy statement also references 'official' LHUMC forms.

The Pastor and Staff-Parish Relations Committee will be charged with administration of the policies and related, personal background

information. Information is to be maintained in strict confidence. In some cases, Linden Heights has had ongoing standard practices which will now be formalized as part of the policy (e.g., Sunday School Registration). Requirements for volunteers may vary somewhat depending upon their level of involvement.

For more information, see Joy Thornburg Melton's Safe Sanctuary pamphlet and the BWC web-site. The Linden Heights Policy will also be posted to the LHUMC web-site.

Baby News....

Colton Thomas Marian
6 lbs. 12 oz.
18 ½" long
Son of Kelly & Steve Marian
Grandson of Debbie & Ken Thomas



Just a reminder – the flower chart for 2009 still has plenty of open Sundays for your flower dedications. You can

have flowers placed on the Altar to celebrate a special occasion like a birthday or anniversary, in memory of a loved one or simply for the glory of God. Put your name next to the date you want and let Debbie Singer know what dedication you would like to have in the bulletin. The cost for flowers is \$30.00 for a centerpiece and special colors can be requested.



Our Church Staff

Pastor	Karen Davis
Home Phone	410-821-0021
Cell Phone	410-812-1338

Director/Music	Gary Van Essen
Accompanist	Jennifer McDonnell
Hand Bell Dir.	Deidre Duda
Adm. Assistant	Debbie Singer
Youth Coord.	Jason Huggins
Nursery	Renee Wachter

Early Service Worship Team:

Dan O'Neil	Mary Lee O'Neil
Terry Kennedy	Greg Singer
Jeff Lawrence	Roger Lukens

Church email:
lindenheightsumc@verizon.net

Pastor Karen email:
PastorKaren24@msn.com

Church Phone: 410-668-6181
Church Fax: 410-668-6485

Church Office Hours:

Tuesday & Thursday from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

The deadline for the July/August Linden Letter is June 16, 2009.

