

The Connection

Ridge United Methodist Church

Volume 7, Issue 3

March 2015

Dear Ridge Church

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Worship with us
Sunday mornings
at 8:30, 9:45, or
11:00

On Sunday, February 8 during all three worship services, those in attendance were introduced to Ridge United Methodist's new Pastor, Rev. Michelle Knight, the current Associate Pastor of Calvary United Methodist Church in Brownsburg, IN. As of July 1, Rev. Knight will be Ridge's new Senior Pastor. Her first Sunday will be July 12.

Staff Parish had the pleasure of meeting Rev. Knight and her husband, Eric two weeks ago and we believe she will be an excellent addition to our Ridge United Methodist Family. However, we know that not everyone has had the same chance to meet her that we have had. Therefore, SPRC wanted to take this opportunity to give you some more information about Rev. Knight that will help you get to know her a bit better and help you understand the experiences and background that she will bring to Ridge Church. First, here is an introduction she wrote for our church:

Pastor Michelle and her husband Eric will celebrate 15 years of marriage this coming October. Eric is a recent MBA graduate of Indiana Wesleyan University. He is a consulting software engineer for a variety of health institutions around the U.S. He refers to himself as a "work from home Dad" with the best kind of commute. Pastor Michelle and Eric have a daughter, Diana. Diana is a fourth grader who enjoys music, dance, art, collecting rocks, swimming, and new adventures. The Knight family pets include a yellow lab named, Duke and a variety of fish.

Here are a few highlights from our conversation with her and from her resume:

- Her Vocational Mission Statement is to "Preach, teach and embody the joy of my salvation."
- Rev. Knight has been at Calvary United Methodist Church since June of 2000.
- She has co-led four capital/building campaigns
- She has supervised numerous areas in her current church, including administrative, music, youth, children's ministry and Christian Education staff members.
- She has helped grow membership at Calvary by over 30 percent and worship attendance by more than 40 percent.
- She has led and taught over 14 confirmation programs.
- She has facilitated and/or developed numerous programs including: adult education, DISCIPLE Bible classes, women's retreat ministry, and many congregation care ministries.
- She has identified visitation at both hospitals and nursing homes as significant to her ministry at Ridge.

We hope this new information will help all of you feel excited and enthused for Rev. Knight's ministry at Ridge. SPRC really believes that she brings both an excellent skillset, and most importantly, a commitment to preaching and teaching about the Christian faith.

If you have any questions about this pastoral transition, please contact any member of SPRC and we will be happy to hear your concerns. Members of SPRC are Dick Jones, Kasie Tenbarger, Susan Capps, Rina Horgan, Jennifer Olejniczak, Matt Svoboda, Dennis Gray, Michael Brandner, Wes Lukoshus, Rick Spindler, Scott Iverson and Erin Del Santo.

Sincerely,

The Staff Parish Relations Committee of Ridge United Methodist Church



WWE in MARCH

Come share your concerns and opinions during "LIVING AND DYING: ETHICAL DILEMMAS," our series on living and dying and the dilemmas facing the modern age. On February 25th, we discussed the issue of "Prolong Life or Prolonged Dying." This month, we will focus on:

- ◆ March 4 TRUSTS AND WILLS. Basic information about wills, trusts and other estate planning devices will be presented.
- ◆ March 11 LIVING WILLS. Advanced Health Care Directives will be discussed.
- ◆ March 18 PLANNING YOUR FUNERAL—CREMATION AND COLUMBARIUM. Pastor Steve will explain how to plan your funeral or memorial service, and burial choices.

Come for dinner at 6 p.m., and stay for the series each week at 6:45 p.m. Dinner menus will be shared each week.

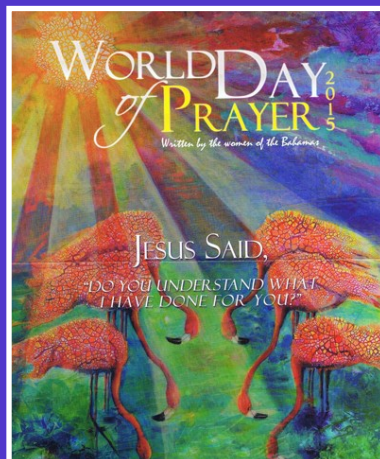
RIDGE COLUMBARIUM



LIMITED-TIME DISCOUNT

During Lent, until Easter Sunday, you can purchase a columbarium niche for \$1,600—\$200 off the regular price of \$1,800. The columbarium, as pictured above, will be constructed and in place before the end of this summer. It will hold 56 niches, which will each hold two urns. The price of a niche includes the cost of engraving the granite face plates, as well as perpetual care.

More information, including application forms, can be found inside the blue folders on display at each church entrance, or you can call the church office at 219-838-4770.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2015

Friday, March 6th at
Immanuel United Church of Christ
in Highland
Registration at noon
Worship at 12:30 p.m.
Fellowship Tea to follow

World Day of Prayer is a worldwide movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year.

RIDGE BOOK GROUP:

Secrets Over Sweet Tea

Monday, March 9th @ 7 p.m.



Secrets can be funny things. We think they keep us safe, but more often than not, they spill out when we least expect and make a mess out of everything. It's a truth that three of this book's main characters – a boisterous pastor's wife, a polished news anchor, and seasoned divorce attorney – learn the hard way. As their lives intersect in the tree-lined streets of Franklin, Tennessee, they embark on a journey of

friendship and courage, desperate to find a way back to laughter, love, and life.

You can join the discussion of this entertaining novel on March 9th in the parlor.

If you can't make this month's discussion, the next book, which is available from the Munster Public Library, is *The River Between Us*, and will be discussed on Monday, April 6th.

Our final WWE of the season on March 25th: 'When God Left the Building'



Did you know that about 4,000 churches in the U.S. close every year? It's creating unprecedented social upheaval, which is the focus of "When God Left the Building."

This special film follows a church where attendance has dropped from 900 to 40. The church is disintegrating from the inside out, and faces a takeover from angry ex-members. The stories of other dying churches, as well as innovative forms of "church" that are thriving, are woven throughout the movie.

Come for dinner at 6 p.m., and stay for the movie at 6:30 p.m. The menu will be announced.



Primetime – March Event

Thursday, March 26th

Meet at the church to carpool to the restaurant at 11 a.m.

Join your Primetime friends as we trek to Glenwood, Illinois for Glenwood Oaks' "Traditional American steaks & seafood served in an unpretentious setting with an old-school vibe."



Annual Missions Rummage Sale

Saturday
April 25th

from
8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Please set aside household items, furniture, working appliances and electronics, sports equipment, etc.

We'll also need your help, plus food items for the bake sale and food court!

Spring is in the Air!

Thursday, April 9th

BAKE SALE @ 10:45 a.m.

LUNCHEON from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sponsored by the United Methodist Women, this event is one of our church's biggest fund raisers, and a highlight in our community. It enables our UMW to send support to numerous community organizations including the Salvation Army, Hospice, Arc, Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity and Greater Hammond Community Services.

We need your help! Please plan to cook, help on the day of the event, and support this effort by purchasing tickets. Sign-up sheets for food and tickets will be available after each church service starting on March 15th. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$4 for children.



Join Us Holy Week For These Special Services

Maundy Thursday, April 2nd at 7 p.m.

Join us for music and the Last Supper.

Good Friday, April 3rd at noon

A solemn remembrance of Christ's crucifixion and death.

Easter Sunday, April 5th

Celebrate the resurrection at all three services!



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Time to spring forward:



On March 8th
turn clocks ahead
one hour!

Operations Team (Finance & Trustees) from the February 10th meeting:

- Treasurer Linda Boender provided Profit & Loss reports for and January:

2015 Operating Income:

\$46,462

2015 Operating Expenses:

\$32,600

2015 Net Income:

\$13,862

Building Fund Expense:

\$5,673

(monthly mortgage payment)

Balance in the Building Fund:

\$110,828*

**The building fund balance reflects the proceeds from the sale of the parsonage*

Mortgage balance:

\$917,468

- Pledge Campaign Update: Pledges as of January 26th: \$331,000 pledged to the General Fund, \$33,075 to the Building Fund. The total pledged (which also includes pledges to missions) is \$369,649.
- Review of the proposed 2015 Budget was deferred until March, due to the change in personnel expenses anticipated with a new pastor.

- Boy Scout Ministry: John Goralczyk said his Boy Scout troop is without a charter. Membership has dwindled in part because of meeting in Hammond, and he hopes transferring the charter from Hammond First UMC to Ridge Church will change that. He asked RUMC to take over his troop's charter. A motion was made and approved to take over the charter. A charter rep from the church is needed—John will bring a name to the March meeting.



Are there any Quickbooks experts out there? Anyone who knows a Quickbooks expert? Linda Boender, our treasurer, has done a great job with our books since joining the staff in 2013. But there are a few enhancements she'd like to make as we head into 2015 for which she could use a bit of help. If you or someone you know would be willing to spend a couple of hours with Linda, it would be appreciated. Please call the church office if you can help.

MISSIONS

Thank you Ridge Church for sending three of us from Ridge to be part of a mission team to Haiti. Fourteen people from four Methodist churches joined to form this team. From January 31st to February 7th, the team replaced six tent homes with secure, 12-by-12 foot wood and aluminum homes in the rocky ravine of Montreal, a suburb of Port-au-Prince.



Residents helped, and the team was able to spend time with families as they went about their lives, preparing their one meal each day. A visit to Faith Academy showed a new tin roof on the guard house, and an enlarged infirmary where sick children can rest before they go home from school.

It was a truly life-enriching experience to be God's hand and feet!

Sue Cook



This year marks Ridge Church's 60th Anniversary.

As we prepare to celebrate, we remember that the story of Ridge Church needs to be told to the next generation. It's a story built around the faithfulness of God and the faithfulness of the generations that preceded us. Therefore, the focus of this anniversary year needs to be a recollection and reminder of God's guidance, expressions of thanks and praise, and a commitment to continue faithfully into the future.

Beginning this month, we will retell the stories of Ridge Church. Each month we will continue to share a decade of events that will lead up to our first of two celebrations later this year.

REMEMBERING THE 50S – HAPPY DAYS AND THE DECISION

On May 26th, 1955 Ridge Methodist Church was formed with about 19 families. Meetings were held in the Independence Park Community Hall in Munster. On September 11, 1955 District Superintendent, Dr. Allen B. Rice, received 29 people into membership.

“REMEMBERING YESTERDAY FOR TOMORROW”

Members of the nearby Methodist Churches served the congregation until the Rev. William Brown, a student at Garrett Seminary, Evanston, Illinois, began serving as the supply Pastor on October 16, 1955.

The appointment of the Rev. Charles M. Blackmon was announced in January 1956 by Bishop Richard Raines. Rev. Blackmon conducted his first service on February 5, 1956.

The meeting place of the Church was moved to the Munster Town Hall (El Salto Restaurant building) in May 1956. In September 1956, 4.7 acres of land was purchased on the corner of 35th Street and Columbia Avenue from the Bieker family for \$21,800. The Northwest Indiana Conference made a grant of \$10,000 and a loan in trust of \$5,000 toward the purchase. In October 1956, a parsonage was purchased at 7706 Forest Avenue in Munster, at a price of \$18,500.

In October 1957, a capital campaign was launched to raise funds toward the first building. The goal for the campaign was \$30,000. The total raised was \$41,542 from 66 families.

In November 1958, the Building Committee selected Kenneth W. Williams of Kokomo as architect to create a master plan for Ridge Church. During this time, Ridge Church was assisted by the Lansing Methodist Church through the use of their facilities. Meetings, choir practices and dinners were held there until permanent facilities were completed.

In December 1959, Ridge Church had grown sufficiently that it needed to move to a larger location. The newly-built Burns Funeral Home on Calumet Avenue was offered at no charge. Sunday School classes continued to meet at the Town Hall.

Next month, as we continue our story, we will look at the '60s and “The Big Move.” Until then:



Keep these special dates in mind:

Sunday, September 13th
One worship service at 10 a.m.
followed by food and fellowship

Sunday, November 22th
One worship service at 10 a.m.
followed by a luncheon at Cloister in the Woods



February was a busy month for Ridge Youth. Despite all the planning, the weather on Sunday, February 1st created a huge attendance problem for Youth Sunday. Thank you to all youth and families who didn't let the heavy snowfall keep them away, and to all Ridge Church members who attended worship services that day. But we want a do-over, so we are planning another Youth Sunday Round 2 for Sunday, June 14th (see Pastor Sheri's article on page 8).

Middle School Youth helped out at our first Lenten Fish Fry on February 20th, and stayed for a one-night lock-in. We watched a movie together and had a study/discussion time.

On February 22nd, youth and members of Martha Circle loaded 26 shipping boxes with school supplies and homemade goodies for our college students. We enjoyed knowing that these College Care Packages remind our college kids that we're

thinking about them.

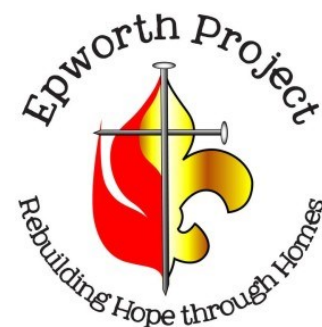
Now we're looking ahead to Graduation Sunday. We'll share in the milestone of high school graduation and celebrate all of our graduating seniors on Sunday, May 31st. They'll get recognition at each service, and a special video will be shown. Plus, they'll enjoy a breakfast with their families between services. Our list includes:

Nick Brandner
Addison Bryce
Billy Johnsen
Alexis Martinez
Julie Neidow
Daniel Percak
Nick Redman
Andrea Scardine
Sarah Smolinski
Patrick Toth

Please let the church office know soon if we missed any students.

Parents of seniors: please provide pictures for the video to Phil Loos by April 12th. They can be scanned and sent electronically to phil@ridgeumc.org, or dropped off in the church office.

Going to Louisiana



July 18-26

Ridge High School Youth will once again travel to Slidell, Louisiana for a week-long mission trip to rehab and rebuild homes in areas affected by Hurricane Katrina. They will work with Epworth Project, which is run by UMCOR's Northshore Relief Center.

To offset the costs of the trip, Ridge Youth will be raising funds through an upcoming Stock Sale and the food concession at Munster's July 3rd fireworks. Watch for more information on how you can help send them to Slidell!

You may remember that on February 1st we celebrated Youth Sunday. It was a fantastic worship service! The Youth were involved in almost every aspect of worship—at all three services!

Jenna Cappel played *He's Got the Whole World in His Hands* as the Prelude and closed each service with the Postlude *Simple Gifts* on the flute. **Sarah Smolinski** opened each service with the Call to Worship. **Noah Moell** led us in the Affirmation of Faith. **Daniel Cappel** asked for Joys and Concerns, and then led us in the Prayer Inviting God Into Our Lives. **Billy Johnsen** offered the Prayer of Blessing over the Gifts & Tithes. Serving as Greeters, Ushers, and Communion Servers were **Ali Banasiak, Erin Bryce, Daniel Cappel, Tristyn Cohs, Kim Giannini, Tim Giannini, Billy Johnsen, Noah Moell, and Shane Smolinski**. **Sam Smolinski** read the Scripture passage. Many of the Youth pulled “double-duty.” And I preached on Jeremiah (not the bullfrog!) 1:4-10. In this passage, Jeremiah is called into servanthood; God calls him to be a prophet, but Jeremiah doesn't feel he can answer his call ... he tells God he's too young.

During the sermon, I asked the Youth if they were just a little nervous about the part in the worship service they would be doing, especially since they are—as Jeremiah was—young. Almost every one said “Yes!” Most were a bit nervous, and yet, they were there to do their part and serve our church for Youth Sunday. All were excited to serve except for one Youth who had hoped to be there but wasn't able to make it to church that morning ...

In fact, many people couldn't make it to church that morning. You may have missed Youth Sunday, too, because the weather turned bad. Heavy, wet snow blanketed the area making driving, walking, and shoveling next to impossible. Many couldn't leave home or feared that if they did they'd get stuck trying to make it to church. Even I found myself stuck on the Calumet Avenue ramp trying to get off 80/94. After backing down the ramp and continuing on 80/94 to Torrence Avenue, I finally arrived at church ... just before the 8:30 service began!

Because so many people were unable to make it to church, **Youth Leader Phil Loos** and I are planning another Youth Sunday (“Round 2”) ... This time we'll celebrate it on June 14th. There's no chance of snow in June. Right?

To warmer weather and to serving God ... Answering God's call isn't always easy. Sometimes we feel we can't respond for a variety of reasons, but remembering that the God who calls us into service is the same One who will be with us every step of the way...

In God's service ~pastor sheri

Education News

This month's focus is on the **Sunday School class of 2nd & 3rd Graders**, taught by **Steve Minton** and **Cindy Leber**.

Steve shares: "[The] second and third graders are currently watching a video series entitled 'What's in the Bible with Buck Denver.' We hope to build on our previous series 'How to Use My Bible' that we have done since last Fall. Buck Denver is always very entertaining and informative, and the characters are funny. The series is easy to use because the videos do most of the teaching. So far, we've learned about terms like *Pentateuch*, *Septuagint*, and *Apocrypha*."

When I asked Steve about his passion for teaching, he replied: "I've been told that I have a knack with kids, and that's probably because I'm a big kid myself sometimes. I enjoy interacting with them on their level, and watching them learn. When I was young, there were so many people that took the time to teach me about the Bible, and I want to pass that knowledge on to others if I can."

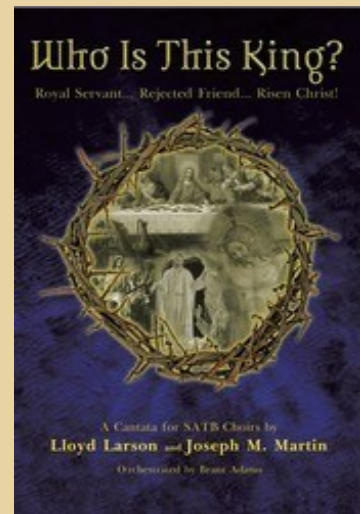
Grateful thanks to all our teachers and education leaders who share their gifts and talents to give us opportunities to grow in our faith and closer to God. Do you have a passion for teaching? **We invite you to share your gifts and talents!**

Feeling a gentle nudge on your spirit? Answer the call! If you would like to be involved in Ridge Church's teaching ministry, contact me at: sheri@ridgeumc.org, by phone 838-4770, or cell 718-4039.

In servanthood, pastor sheri

YOU CAN HELP MAKE EASTER AN EGG-STRAVAGANZA!

Easter Sunday, April 5th, will be a fun morning of special activities for Ridge children, including an Easter Egg Hunt. **You can help by donating individually-wrapped, bit-size candies to fill the Easter eggs. Look for a special bin outside the fellowship hall.**



CHANCEL CHOIR TO PRESENT CANTATA ON PALM SUNDAY

Plan now to attend one of our traditional services at either 8:30 a.m. or 11 a.m. on Sunday, March 29th for a special presentation of selections from the cantata, *Who Is This King*. These will include a section about the King of Glory riding into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

VOICES ARE NEEDED!

If you'd like to sing on this special Sunday, please let Joe Felice know by emailing to joe@ridgeumc.org, or by calling the church office. Rehearsals are on Thursdays at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary.



Dear Ridge
Family,

Thank you for
all the cards,
prayers, love
and support
you have given
us with the
passing of my
mom, Monte
Fowdy.

Our family is
truly blessed to
be part of such
a caring
church family.

Love,

Monte & John



Dear Friends,

We are very grateful for the generous donation. A contribution like yours goes far in providing for the need of people who have so little.

GHCS prides itself as being a leader in the delivery of social services to those people in our community who are truly in need. GHCS strives to bring together a variety of funding sources and volunteers to meet the needs of the entire community. Because of many cutbacks in State and Federal funds, we are more than ever dependent on local donations to efficiently serve our community.

Sincerely,

Timothy P. Cottingham
Executive Director
Greater Hammond Community Services

*Do all the good you can, by all the means
you can, in all the ways you can,
in all the places you can, to all the people
you can,
as long as ever you can.*

—John Wesley

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

1 Eden Gramke	16 Audrey Olejniczak
2 Andrea Scardine	19 Mark Alberson
3 Maridonna Helweg	Jacquie Biel
5 Karen Anderson	Dave Miller
7 Erin Bryce	20 Samantha Cohs
9 Aubrie Cox	Brittany Goralczyk
Greg Potchen	21 Jennifer Zaronias
11 Nicole Caddick	23 Marcia Smitka
12 Sylvia Gould	25 Nick Brandner
Lauren Hamblin	Tristyn Cohs
13 Tiffany Bandstra	26 Phil Ehlebracht
Dayanna Frey	Gloria Lawbaugh
Joyce Waring	29 Charles Iverson
14 Haley Conger	30 Les Bogs
15 Kim Giannini	31 Jakob Barlow
Shari Mybeck	John Wagner
Tim Stewart	

USHERS

8:30

Carol Osgerby
Gale Osgerby
Pat Snyder
Russ Snyder

11:00

Wayne Cable
Shirley Franks
Dorothy Seefurth
David Walters

GREETERS

8:30

3/1 David & Laura Elkins
3/8 Chuck & Carol Lair
3/15 David & Laura Elkins
3/22 Mark & Bonnie Alberson
3/29 Sue Cook & Rina Horgan

11:00

3/1 Dennis & Sue Gray
3/8 Lew & LaVern Grasty
3/15 Sue Gray & Karen Mitcheltree
3/22 Emily Jacobi & Debbi Kiefer
3/29 Bernice Nance & Dorothy Seefurth

March Anniversaries

Don & Kathy O'Brien
Dan & Laura Potchen

March 7th
March 25th

**WE'VE
MOVED**

Larry & Betty Temple
13029 Grasselli Street
Cedar lake, IN 46303
219-781-4474

Bill & Nancy Caddick
138 Carnoustie Lane
Schererville, IN 46375

LITURGISTS

8:30

3/1 Sue Molenaar
3/8 Mandy Barbee
3/15 Wes Lukoshus
3/22 Rina Horgan
3/29 Chuck Lair

11:00

3/1 Cindy Regnier
3/8 Sue Cook
3/15 Dennis Gray
3/22 Renee Jones
3/29 Rick Schumacher

HOSPITALITY

8:30 & 11:00

Rachel Circle

9:45

3/1 Dayanna Frey & Lorena Alvarado
3/8 Jennifer Hill
3/15 Charlene & Tracey Wilson
3/22 Danny & Lisa Percak
3/29 Danny & Lisa Percak



**Ridge United
Methodist Church**

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Munster, IN 46321

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Do you have news to
share? The deadline
for **The Connection**
is March 16th.

Join us on these Fry-Days!

March 6th

March 20th

From 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., let our servers fill your plate with fried perch, macaroni and cheese, green beans, coleslaw and baked potatoes.

Homemade desserts are on the side!

Carry-outs and children's meals
available.

Donations: \$10 adults, \$4 children

Volunteers are also needed to serve,
clear tables, cook, and more. Please
sign up!

**BEST FISH
FRY IN
TOWN!**

