

The Connection

Ridge United Methodist Church

Volume 7, Issue 4

April 2015

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

The Radical Nature of Jesus

About 10 years ago I was given a copy of a book that, at that time, was considered ground breaking: Brian McLaren's *A Generous Orthodoxy*. I hated it! It didn't seem ground breaking to me at all; instead it seemed wishy washy. McLaren seemed unwilling to say what he was thinking—it was always just below the surface, but he always retreated to safe territory.

It was years before I was interested in reading more from him, and in the interim he wrote some powerful expositions on modern Christianity that have had a huge impact on me. As a church, we studied *Everything Must Change* about four years ago, and his book, *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road?* is insightful and challenging. But it is his newest book, *We Make the Road by Walking*, that really struck a cord with me. The best way I can describe it is as a devotional book that is meant to be studied in a group. It is divided into 52 chapters and is intended to be read one chapter each week.

I began reading in the middle of the book, around Christmas time, and have found the material engaging and provocative. The material for Lent has really made me think. It is all based around the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew's Gospel, and McLaren helps point out what a radical message

this is. As we get closer to Easter, we need to remember that Jesus wasn't just a nice guy who was in the wrong place at the wrong time. Jesus challenged the power structures of his day—from the imperial Roman government, to the Jewish authorities, to many of the common people. Jesus turned their world upside down; and, as a result, they hung him on a tree.

Easter is a time in which we are invited to remember the radical nature of Jesus. To remember all the systems he challenged. To remember his understanding and invitation to all of us to live Kingdom values. But it is also a time to remember that whatever hardships come our way, because we choose to live within those Kingdom values, not even death is enough to slow its power.

What have you been doing this Lent to grow in God's grace? Are you taking time, finding opportunities to allow Kingdom values to take root in your life? Lent may be about over, and Easter upon us—but I invite you to pick up *We Make the Road by Walking*. We can grow together via conversation, or email, as we challenge ourselves to become more committed like the preacher from Nazareth.

Pastor Steve

Changes to the Ridge Church Facility Use Policy are effective April 1st

The Ridge Church Operations Team at its March meeting made the following changes to the Facility Use Policy and rental fees:

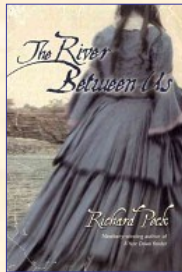
- Church members will now be charged a nominal fee of \$50 to use the facility, plus pay the site supervisor fee of \$15 per hour (when a site supervisor is required)
- Nonprofit groups will be charged \$75 to use the fellowship hall
- The following clause was added: *If alcohol is found, the event will be ended immediately.*
- Added a requirement that the renter representative must be present during the entire event.

Easter Celebration

April 5th at 9:45 a.m.
in the Education Hall



- ♥ Hear the story of Easter
 - ♥ Enjoy games, crafts, activities and treats
 - ♥ EASTER EGG HUNT! for ages four to 11
- More information to come!



Ridge Book Group: THE RIVER BETWEEN US Monday, April 6th @ 7 p.m.

At the start of the Civil War, two mysterious young women get off a steamboat in a small southern Illinois river town. No one in town knows them, so rumors fly. Who are they? Are they spies for the South? This tale of mystery and war is a breathtaking portrait of the lifelong impact one person can have on another. **All are welcome to join the discussion of *The River Between Us* on April 6th in the parlor.**

LAY SERVANT ACADEMY

Saturdays, April 18th to May 16th
At Michigan City First UMC

Lay Servants serve the local church or charge in any way in which their witness or leadership and service inspires the laity to deeper commitment to Christ and more effective discipleship. The Lay Servant Academy offers a Basic Course, Preaching I, II & III, and sessions on the beliefs and practices of The United Methodist Church, prayer, and connecting with.



Are you thinking about becoming a Lay Servant?

More information is online at
www.inumc.org/northdistrictlayservantministries.



Spring is in the Air!

Spring Luncheon & Bake Sale

Thursday, April 9th
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Women of Ridge Church are busy finalizing the plans for the annual Spring Luncheon on Thursday, April 9th. The menu includes traditional favorites: hot chicken salad, marzetti, and a variety of homemade salads and cookies. There will also be a BAKE SALE with lots of homemade sweets to choose from, including sugar-free options. All donations for this sale are appreciated. Please place individual portions on small plates.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$4 for children (ages four to 10). Doors will open at 10:45 a.m. for the BAKE SALE. Express lanes are available for those with limited time, and carry-out meals can be requested. For more information and tickets, call the church office at 219-838-4770.

All proceeds will benefit local, national and international mission projects.

Primetime Trip to

Konnie Kuiper Classic Auto Museum



Thursday, April 23
Meet at the church
at 9:15 a.m.

For our April adventure, we will be the guest of Konnie Kuiper at his Auto Museum in Griffith. Konnie has numerous antique cars, buggies, a stagecoach, plus many historical artifacts dealing with transportation.



This is a unique opportunity to tour a mint collection of vintage vehicles—a field trip you won't want to miss! Of course, none of our adventures are complete without lunch. Following our tour we will stop at Teibels. We hope you will come and bring guests! Please sign up on the Primetime Bulletin Board across from Pastor Sheri's office.

CONFIRMATION

The **Confirmation Banquet** for the 2014-2015 Confirmation Class will be Saturday, April 18th at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We will celebrate the achievements of this group and listen to each of the confirmands share the Bible passage they memorized. This will be a great night to share with them!

Confirmation Sunday is April 19th, and we will recognize our confirmation students at each of the services. Families and mentors of this year's class are invited to come celebrate with the youth who have worked so hard to learn about the Church and become members of Ridge Church.

Golf League begins April 27th



The Ridge Golf League will begin a new season at Wicker Park on Monday, April 27th. Tee-off is at 4 p.m. each Monday, and play is nine holes alternating between front and back nine week-to-week. Cost is \$10 walking, and \$20 with a golf cart.

This is a coed league, so all—men and women, guests included—are welcome to play.

RUMMAGE SALE



Appliances

Children's
Clothing

Electronics

Furniture

Lamps

Linens

Pictures

Records

Rugs

Seasonal

Sports

Tools

& more

Annual Missions Rummage Sale

Saturday, April 25th

8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Bake Sale & Food Court

Mark the date for our biggest missions fundraiser of the year! Please set aside items to donate—household items, furniture, working appliances and electronics, sports equipment, children's clothing, toys, books, etc.

We'll also need your help, plus food items for the bake sale and food court so watch for sign up sheets soon!

From the March/April issue of the Hoosier United Methodist newsletter, *Together*: The Rev. Dr. Kirk Byron Jones said the key to his better-paced life is: "Every morning I have my BREW—not Starbucks"

B.R.E.W. stands for:

Be still (Psalm 46:10)

Receive God's love (John 3:16)

Embrace yourself (Psalm 8:5) and

Welcome the day by being grateful about life (Psalm 118:24).

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**April 22nd
Celebrate
the Earth!**



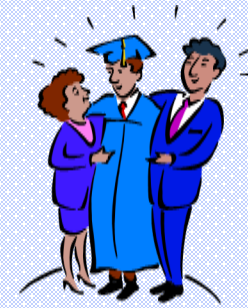
Beautification Day Saturday, May 2nd 8 a.m. to noon

We need all hands on deck to help clear away the signs of a hard winter and spruce up the grounds around Ridge Church. Bring rakes, shovels, gloves, trimmers—and we'll put you to work!



Farewell Celebration for Pastor Steve and Nancy Sunday, May 17th

We will have a combined worship service at 10 a.m., followed by a carry-in lunch in the fellowship hall. A letter with details for this event will be mailed to each household. There will be sign-up sheets in both church entryways. If you would like to contribute to help cover the cost of the chicken and dessert we will provide, please mark your check or envelope with a note indicating Farewell Carry-In.



Graduation Sunday, May 31st

It's time to begin thinking about the end of another school year. It's a tradition at Ridge Church to recognize our graduating seniors on Graduation Sunday. We have identified the following students as part of the class of 2015.

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

If you know of a high school senior who should be included in this list, please contact the church office. Also, parents: please provide photos of your senior to Phil Loos by Sunday, April 12th for use in a special graduation video.



“REMEMBERING YESTERDAY FOR TOMORROW”

As we continue preparing for our 60th Anniversary, and remembering the story of Ridge Church, here is what the scriptures tell us in Joel 1:3:

*Tell it to your children,
and let your children tell it
to their children, and their
children to the next
generation.*

Groundbreaking ceremonies for the first building were held on June 26, 1960. On November 20, 1960, the cornerstone was laid. The fellowship hall, offices, education wing and kitchen were constructed first at a cost of about \$125,000. F. G. Crary and Son, Inc. of Hammond was the builder.

The first service held in the new building was a Communion service on Friday, April 21, 1961. The first Sunday service was held on April 23, 1961. Dedication and consecration was on Sunday, September 24, 1961, with Bishop Raines



I am feeling much better since I had my heart attack.

Thank you to everyone who sent cards. It's nice when people care. I feel blessed.

*Love to all,
Millie Gresham*

*Dear Ridge Church Family,
We want to thank you for your kind words, prayers, and notes of encouragement as Mom, Tilly Thorp, was declining.*

We felt surrounded by peace and love from you during her visitation and funeral and from your cards of sympathy.

*Sincerely,
Gloria & Bill
Thomson*

A special thank you to the Youth Group for bringing goodies and school supplies to put with our cookies for college students in February. Also a big thank you to the Ridge United Methodist Women for financing this project by paying for postage. The Martha Circle has sent cookies and Upper Room devotionals to our college students for well over 25 years.

Martha Circle

I recently had the pleasure of joining a friend for lunch at Bombers. This was a new experience for me... BBQ!, in Munster?! Well, I've found a new favorite place to eat, and as we talked we discussed life and living, living in a Christ-like manner, and about "guiding principles" for life.

He shared some stories about his mom, a devout Christian who was influenced and inspired by others early in life, so much so that she set a philosophy by which to live. She raised her children with these values so that they, too, could live as richly and passionately, and Christ-like. I'd like to share some of her wisdom with you..."By the help of God, always remember..."

1. Stick to your principles and ideas of what is right.
2. Don't be tempted or persuaded to lower your standards.
3. Remember your future health and your whole life.
4. Don't forget that how you live

- now [can be] hard to change [later].
5. Some day you will be proud of your pure character if you have kept it stainless.
6. Don't be afraid of what people say or think.
7. Be willing and eager to help others.
8. Be obedient, dependable, and trustworthy...
9. Remember to believe and trust in God..."

He shared that his mom has passed. But surely, her legacy lives on... not only through her children and grandchildren, but now also through us as we consider her wisdom and seek to also live as richly and passionately in Christ.

As the weather warms and we think about all that is new with Springtime (finally!) upon us, also think about this wisdom, which can help to bring us new life...

By God's grace ~pastor sheri

Education News

In February, we held our first Education Committee meeting to begin focusing on our church's spiritual and Christian educational formation. We had a great turnout and you now have an awesome team of dedicated members who are passionate about Christian education! When you see an Ed Comm member, be sure to thank them for dedicating their time and talent in helping to shape Ridge Church's Christian education... Committee members are: **Michael Brandner, Shelley Cohs, Nancy Conger, Linda Ehlebrancht, Kathy Giannini, Sue Gray, Cindy Leber, Phil Loos, Bob Miskimins, Kim Miskimins, Sarah Schroeder, Beth Ann Smolinski, and Jeanine Svoboda.** Thank you to each of you for serving our church in this way!

The Education Committee is already off to a running start making plans and working on upcoming events. And, a vision statement was created to use as our guiding principle: "Christian Education is valuable because it teaches about God (and denominational beliefs) helping to form and deepen our

relationship with God as well as helping us to grow in community and learn to be disciples sharing love, compassion, and acceptance."

As these team members set the sight for Ridge Church's Christian education, please support them with your prayers, and occasionally with your time, so that, together, we can all learn and grow in Christ.

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? Are you interested in being on the Education Committee to help shape our church's Christian education? Feeling a gentle nudge on your spirit? Answer the call! **We invite you to share your gifts and talents!** If you would like to be involved in Ridge Church's education ministry, contact me at: sheri@ridgeumc.org, by phone 838-4770, or cell 718-4039. In servanthood, pastor sheri

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 John Rogers | 15 Lindsey Conger |
| 2 Doug Simpson | Betty Merrick |
| 3 Amanda Lopez | 16 Wayne Cable |
| 5 Heather Burmester | Kaitlyn Olejniczak |
| Chuck Lair | 17 Helena Larson |
| Betty Temple | 18 Laura Potchen |
| 6 Barb Ehlebracht | 19 Ed Rangel |
| Luke Hay | Harold Shevchenko |
| Madeline Hay | Lee Worthy |
| 8 Kevin Mybeck | 21 Jeff Adams |
| Emma Potchen | 22 Alex Ehlebracht |
| Jack Ray | 23 Drew Bogs |
| Peggy Schu | Isabelle Caddick |
| 9 Sheri Barbee | Tom Knight |
| Abby Oedzes | 24 Eric Anderson |
| 10 Ann Bochnowski | 26 Charles Crary |
| 12 Adam Tenbarger | Reese Holloway |
| 13 Kyle Birgel | 27 Clare Bogs |
| Casey Clarke | Ginny Scatena |
| 14 Katy Minton | 28 Tim Carroll |
| Sue Morris | David Elkins |
| John Novak | Ramey Jones |
| Danny Percak | |
| Lester Schmock | |

USHERS

8:30
David Elkins
Laura Elkins
Chuck Lair

11:00
Lew Grasty
John Novak
Rich Matthews
Shirley Matthews

GREETERS

8:30
4/5 Carol Lair
4/12 Carol Lair
4/19 Carol Lair
4/26 Carol Lair

11:00
4/5 Bernice Nance &
Dorothy Seefurth
4/12 Cheryl Roach &
Dorothy Seefurth
4/19 Jim & Renee Jones
4/26 Larry & Phyllis Washington

LITURGISTS

8:30
4/5 Mandy Barbee
4/12 Wes Lukoshus
4/19 Chuck Lair
4/26 Kevin Mybeck

11:00
4/5 Cindy Regnier
4/12
4/19
4/26 *Please Volunteer!*

HOSPITALITY

8:30 & 11:00
Martha Circle

9:45
4/5 Dayanna Frey &
Lorena Alvarado
4/12 Jennifer Hill
4/19 Charlene & Tracey Wilson
4/26 Danny & Lisa Percak

April Anniversaries

Don & Elsie Lammering	April 16
Scott & Sheri Barbee	April 18
Tom & Virginia Schreuder	April 18
Pat & Cheri O'Brien	April 19
Bill & Nancy Caddick	April 24

All in the Family

PASSING

Ray Barron
in February

Doreen Lawbaugh
February 22nd





**Ridge United
Methodist Church**

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Do you have news to
share? The deadline
for **The Connection**
is April 15th.

Holy Week Special Services

Maundy Thursday,
Communion & hand
washing at 7 p.m.

Good Friday at
noon

Easter Sunday,
April 5th
Celebrate at
8:30, 9:45 or
11 a.m.

