



The Connection

Ridge United Methodist Church

Volume 7, Issue 11

November 2015

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Generosity Begets Generosity

As the summer winds blow into the autumn colors, so we transition into one of my favorite seasons of the church year. Autumn is ripe for a time to be reflective, grateful, and generous. Throughout November you and I will share in our first of many, future seasons focused on stewardship.

As our celebration of generosity begins, I would like to share with you two of the many things I learned at our eleven Cottage Meetings this last August. If you recall or for those who were unable to attend, I asked several questions. One of those was, "What are Ridge UMC's best strengths?" Here are the six most frequently repeated strengths shared throughout the eleven summer cottage meetings:

- supportive
- responsive
- sincere faith
- generous
- friendly/friendship
- accepting/welcoming.

Every time these blessings were repeated I smiled a contented smile because very clearly, the people of Ridge UMC know what makes our congregation special!

One of my final questions was, "What big, bold dream do you have for Ridge to do for God?" As I listened to our congregation dream during the month of August, I kept thanking our God for sending me to such an amazing people who dare to dream, who dream big, and who have Kingdom-sized dreams! Here

are the five most frequently repeated dreams shared throughout our eleven summer cottage meetings:

- Growth especially focused on discipling kids and youth;
- Growth in numbers as well as spiritual depth
- Boldly, assertively share with others that we are a "hidden gem" in the Region
- Deepen engagement and commitment of our members
- Be debt free (i.e. no mortgage) as a congregation

Truly, Ridge's heart bursts with extravagant generosity! We are a people who have been blessed over and abundantly with the generosity of our God in Christ. We are a people who mirror that generosity in the world and community as live thankful lives together. We are a people who trust in the providing care of our God to awaken our big, Kingdom dreams for our future ministry together.

As you prayerfully consider what our church leadership and generosity team have put together for our next steps in ministry, continue to give thanks for our blessings and continue to dream because our God in Christ is preparing us for a wonderful new adventure.

See you in the generous place,

Pastor Michelle

COAT DRIVE



Ridge Church is once again a collection site for the annual North Township Coat Drive. Please spread this news to your friends and neighbors! New and gently-used coats and winter gear for both children and adults can be dropped off at church through Sunday, November 8th. Items will be distributed to hundreds of local needy residents on Saturday, November 14th at Wicker Park.



House Blessing & Open House for the Knight family Sunday, November 8th

2 p.m. to 5 p.m. (Central time)
1103 Boxwood Drive in Munster
(Corner of Boxwood and York in Cobblestones)

Our Ridge UMC family is invited to the Knight home! Rev. Paul Arnold, our Associate District Superintendent, will offer a brief House Blessing at 2 p.m.

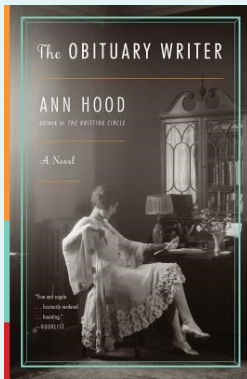
Come and go anytime during the afternoon.
Your presence is your gift.

From Your Staff Parish:

At the Staff Parish meeting on October 6th, the committee put in motion an exciting new change. We considered a proposal to add a deacon or soon-to-be-ordained Deacon of the United Methodist Church to the Ridge staff whose focus will be in family and children's ministries. This proposal arose from feedback received at the cottage meetings and conversations with various members of the Ridge Church community. A search committee is now searching for candidates, and we anticipate this new staff member will start after January 1st.

As part of the staff restructuring, Kathy O'Brien will be stepping aside as Minister of Spiritual Formation. We appreciate Kathy's support for and service to our church over the last 14 years, and will have a special Sunday of recognition and celebration on November 15th to honor her service to our church.





Ridge Book Group: The Obituary Writer Monday, November 16th @ 7 p.m. in the parlor

Part literary mystery and part love story, *The Obituary Writer* examines expectations of marriage and love, the roles of wives and mothers, and the emotions of grief, regret, and hope. It moves the reader gracefully and persuasively between post-earthquake San Francisco in 1906 and the early 1960s, creating unexpected connections between these two bygone eras, and in the process, manages to illuminate the present as well as the past.

You can pick up your copy of this enthralling novel at the Munster Public Library, and join the discussion.

The Virtual Offering Plate



With more people giving electronically or online, offering plates passed during services sometimes look empty. And those who do give electronically may feel awkward when they pass the plate and have nothing to put in. Ridge Church offers a remedy for both: the *Virtual Offering Plate* card.

These cards can be found in the back of each pew in the sanctuary, and are available for anyone to use. You can place one in the offering plate; you can scan the QR code (inside the picture above) for a quick-and-easy donation; or you can take one home and follow the instructions on the back to make an online donation through our web site using Easy Tithe.

Thank you for giving this a try, and please let us know what you think!

Extravagant
GENEROSITY
The Heart of Giving

Join us

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22ND @ 10 A.M.

as we receive new members and pledge our generosity to Ridge Church's 2016 needs.

Following the service, we will gather for a meal in the fellowship hall.



Salvation Army Angel Tree tags will be available starting November 22nd. Unwrapped items are to be returned to Ridge Church by Sunday, December 15th.

Please take advantage of all the sales NOW to buy gifts for our local underprivileged kids. All items are welcome! Gifts do not need to match a tag.

SHOEBOX CHRISTMAS PROJECT

You can help bring joy this Christmas to children who live in the Spirit Lake Nation region in the Dakotas.



Shoebbox Christmas is a program that provides Christmas gifts to children in need in the Dakotas and Minnesota. In 2014, 6,445 gifts were donated and distributed by the Spirit Lake

Ministry Center to children in the Crow Creek and Pine Ridge reservations of South Dakota; the Spirit Lake Nation and Turtle Mountain reservations in North Dakota; and the Red Lake Reservation in Minnesota.

Kathy Giannini makes it easy to do — just pick up a shoe box at church and follow the instructions! Boxes are due back to church by Sunday, November 22nd.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

It's time to order poinsettias for the altar. Watch for special order envelopes on the Welcome tables in the narthex and Fellowship Hall. Please place your order by Sunday, December 15th.

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Advent

Hope · Love · Joy · Peace



Advent begins Sunday, November 29th, and brings lots of activities to Ridge Church. Mark your calendars now for these special holiday events:

- ◆ Christmas Cantatas, Sunday, December 13th @ 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. services
- ◆ Children's Pageant, Sunday, December 13th @ 9:45 a.m.
- ◆ Christmas Brunch, Thursday, December 17th @ 11 a.m.
- ◆ Christmas Eve Services on Thursday, December 24th @ 5 p.m., 9 p.m. or 11 p.m.

Readers are also needed to light the Advent candles during services throughout the season. Please call the church office to volunteer.



Advent Offerings

Your Ridge Missions Team chose the following projects to feature on your 2015 Advent Offering envelopes:

- ◆ Monday/Saturday Soup Kitchen Program
- ◆ Children of Abraham
- ◆ Pastor's Discretionary Fund
- ◆ South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church for Flood Relief
- ◆ Faith Academy Feeding Program

Watch for more information coming soon in your Advent letter.



**When Methodists are United,
we turn our love into action.**

UMC #GivingTuesday • Dec. 1, 2015

Give Time • Give Donations • Give Voice • Give Prayers

One hundred percent of your gift through The Advance transforms lives all around the world.

ACTIVATE LOVE. TRANSFORM LIVES. CHANGE THE WORLD.



www.umcmmission.org/give



HIGH SCHOOL FALL LOCK-IN

NOVEMBER 6TH & 7TH

The High School Youth Group is invited to participate in a lock-in style retreat, beginning **Friday, November 6th at 5 p.m.** and concluding on **Saturday, November 7th at 4 p.m.** at Ridge Church. The cost per youth is \$15. They will be watching a movie on Friday night and participating in Saturday workshop sessions. Friday's dinner and Saturday's breakfast and lunch (as well as snacks) will be provided. Permission slips will be available on the door to the youth room (or see Phil for more details).

Christmas Brunch

**Thursday, December 17th
at 11 a.m.**

MUSIC BY THE MHS CHOIRS!

This annual brunch is sponsored by the United Methodist Women of Ridge Church. Tickets are available after services on **Sunday, November 29th, December 6th and 13th, and in the church office.**

SHOPPING TRIP SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6TH



Ridge Youth should plan now for our annual Holiday Shopping! More details about where we're going, what time we leave, a return time and dinner will be provided soon!

CHURCH CAROLING/ YOUTH PARTY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20TH



Come caroling at 4 p.m., and we'll have our Christmas Party when we return! This will have a great night of fun and fellowship, with the traditional white elephant gift exchange!

Reminder: There will be no Youth Group on December 27th or January 3rd due to Christmas Break.

Operations Team from the October 20th meeting:

- Treasurer Linda Boender provided Profit & Loss reports for income and expense through September:

2015 Operating Income:
\$318,419

2015 Operating Expenses:
\$316,998

2015 Net Income:
\$1,420

Mortgage Income for September:

\$4,628

Monthly Mortgage Payment:
\$5,673

Mortgage balance:
\$894,367

- New Sound System: Pastor Michelle shared that a member of the Ridge congregation is providing the funds needed to fix the sound problems in both the sanctuary and fellowship hall. The project will hopefully be completed by Christmas, and will help congregants better hear the services, and produce better quality recordings of sermons for download onto www.ridgeumc.org.
- Apportionment: The Operations chairperson discovered that RUMC's 2014 tithe to the Conference was only 47% of what it should have been. Due to finances, making a 100% tithe in 2015 will not be possible; however, the

Operations Team approved tithing at 65%, which will be a total of \$31,500 given to Conference.

- Staffing Changes: Pastor Michelle explained the Staff Parish decision to dissolve the Director of Education and Spiritual Formation positions. This enables RUMC to hire in 2016 a full-time deacon to focus on children and family ministries. A search is currently in progress.
- 2016 Budget: A proposed budget was approved that allows for 3% growth over the 2015 budget. It goes before the Administrative Council on October 27th for formal approval.

Missions Team from the October 13th meeting:

- It was noted that in the financial report, the balance in the Undesignated account is the lowest seen in years. This means that money given by the congregation for general mission projects has been spent as intended.
- Local Missions: Kathy Giannini had much to report. The North Township Coat Drive is underway, with RUMC being the only collection site in Munster. Shoebox Christmas, The Salvation Army Angel Tree, and bell ringing at Jewel in Munster are all in the works through mid-December.

- It was also noted that participation in the Saturday lunch program is down. A reimbursement process was approved to allow those who cook and serve means to get reimbursed up to 50% of the total they spend on food and supplies. Funds will be taken out of what is currently called the Soup Kitchen account—this was renamed the Monday/ Saturday Soup Kitchen.
- Advent Projects: the following projects will be featured on the Advent Offering envelopes: Monday/ Saturday Soup Kitchen, Children of Abraham, Pastor's Discretionary, Flood Relief through the South Carolina UM Conference, Faith Academy Feeding Program.
- Clothing Bonanza Recap: Sue Cook thanked Sue Gray and the others who organized this fundraiser on September 26th. Total proceeds raised (including a subsequent garage sale at the Cooks') were \$1,105, which was given to the RUMC General Fund.
- **The Missions Team expressed thanks for the ongoing efforts of Lew & LaVern Grasty, who have been taking donated food items left in the shopping carts to Project Love Food pantry at Cedar Lake UMC.**



Ridge Columbarium Dedication on Sunday, September 27th

Ridge family and friends gathered on September 27th to dedicated our new Columbarium. During a special ceremony, the following members of the Columbarium Committee were recognized and thanked:

Corene Buchanan
Wayne Cable
Dave Miller
Rick Schumacher
Jeanine Svoboda

A Service for the Burial of Ashes was also held for James "Buck" Buchanan, and a beautiful red maple tree was dedicated in memory of John Nickoloff.



Step Outside Your Comfort Zone By Joe Felice

When was the last time you tried something you had never done before? As creatures of habit, we tend to eat the same foods, take the same route home from work, surround ourselves with the same people every day, and make excuses why we cannot sing in Ridge's Chancel Choir or ring bells with the Ridge Ringers. There's comfort in the familiar—that's why we call it our "comfort zone."

But how many of the world's great achievements resulted from playing it safe? Accomplishments—including personal growth—happen only when we lengthen our stride, challenge ourselves, and reach out just a bit.

The child who learns to ride a bicycle, the grandmother who takes up oil painting, the student who enrolls in a difficult class—all leave their comfort zones to fulfill a dream. As a result, their lives became richer and their outlook brighter.

A nurse once asked several terminally ill patients to share any regrets they had at the end of their lives. She found that many felt they had not become everything they could have been—that they had left too many songs unsung. They wished they had lived up to their potential. By hanging back, afraid to try something new, we risk facing that same regret.

Often it's as simple as deciding to be a better listener or to perform a small act of service every day. Speaking a kind word to a stranger, singing a little bit louder during Sunday hymns, lifting someone's spirits with a phone call—there are countless ways to try something new.

Once we take that step into the unknown—even if it's a small step—we discover that our comfort zone was *actually holding us back*. The satisfaction of conquering our weaknesses, the joy of expanding our ability to serve others, will more than make up for any "discomfort." All are welcome to help grow membership in the Chancel Choir or Ridge Ringers. Nobody will be refused, and even those of us who think we can't sing, or have tin ears. We may even discover some truth in the phrase "*Life begins where your comfort zone ends.*"

If you would like to share in a ministry of song and music, then please consider joining the Music Ministries of Ridge Church. The Ridge Ringers handbell choir meets each Monday at 7:30 p.m. to rehearse. The Chancel Choir rehearses on Thursdays at 7 p.m., and the Solid Ground Praise Band rehearses at 7 p.m. each Wednesday.



Kathy Giannini
makes it look easy
and fun to prepare
food to serve at City
Rescue Mission—we
encourage YOU to
try it!

Thank you, Kathy, for
your dedication to
local ministries that
serve the needs of
those less fortunate
in our region.

From Pastor Sheri,

I want to share grateful thanks for the wonderful sending off you gave me. Thank you for the cards, the notes, and the gifts. I love the Prayer Blanket and thank you for your prayers that remain woven within its fabric... a tangible reminder of your love and my time at Ridge.

As I promised you during my last Sunday at Ridge, we raised you in prayer during my first Sunday at Salem. We consecrated the traveling Communion set for use at Salem along with a new Chalice and Paten, and all of us will keep all of you in our prayers. Thank you!

peace and blessings be yours,

sheri

All in the Family

We said good-bye to the following members last month:

George Cook,
October 20th

Millie Gresham,
October 23rd

Their names, as well as the following, will be lifted up during our All Saints service on November 1st:

Ray Barron
Doreen Lawbaugh
Fred Strickland
Joyce Waring
Larry Temple
Elizabeth Lorek
Gloria Banjura

Happy Birthday!

1 Karen Mitcheltree	16 Delaney Harwood
2 Eunice Leo	Marion Ray
3 Donald Lammering	18 Corene Buchanan
Kathy O'Brien	Noah Moell
Rick Spindler	19 Kerry Connor
4 Tim Lukoshus	Mariana Rogers
Kasie Tenbarga	20 Maria Yost
6 Bill Thomson	22 Dolores Ray
7 Christopher Cappo	Mary Jo Smith
Brett Stewart	24 Janice Dobrinich
8 Dylan Hoehn	25 Judi Fremouw
Marcia Matthews	Claire Scardine
11 Donna Hill	27 Judith Jones
13 Betty Angotti	29 Elaine Black
14 Nancy Conger	Alison Cook
Sara Erwin	Josh Lukoshus
Sherrill Freeman	Allison Mybeck
Steve Ray	30 Elizabeth Andree
Gloria Thomson	

Ushers

8:30
Carol Osgerby
Gale Osgerby
Pat Snyder
Russ Snyder

11:00
Wayne Cable
Shirley Franks
Dorothy Seefurth
Dave Walters

Greeters

8:30

Please Volunteer!

11:00

11/1 Larry & Phyllis Washington
11/8 Tom & Virginia Schreuder
11/15 Lew & LaVern Grasty
11/22 Dorothy Seefurth
11/29 Larry & Phyllis Washington

Liturgists

8:30

11/1 Sue Molenaar
11/8 Rina Horgan
11/15 Wes Lukoshus
11/22 One service @ 10 a.m.
11/29

9:45

11/1 Tiffany Bandstra
11/8 Sue Morris
11/15 Lorrayne Schmock
11/22 One service @ 10 a.m.
11/29 Sarah Schroder

11:00

11/1 Rick Schumacher
11/8 Cindy Regnier
11/15
11/22 One service @ 10 a.m.
11/29 Rick Schumacher

November Anniversaries

Lew & LaVern Grasty	November 3
Wayne & Janet Cable	November 10
Buddy & Claire Scardine	November 14
Chuck & Nancy Simpson	November 24
David & Sheryl Walters	November 25
Larry & Kathy Giannini	November 28
Bill & Janie Wilson	November 29



Marie Cost

8421 Manor Avenue
#205
Munster, IN 46321

Hospitality

8:30 & 11:00

Lydia Circle

9:45

11/1 Dayanna Frey & Lorena Alvarado
11/8 Jennifer Hill
11/15 Charlene & Tracey Wilson
11/22 Danny & Lisa Percak
11/29 Danny & Lisa Percak



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Worship with us

Sunday mornings at 8:30, 9:45,

or 11:00

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

UPCOMING sermons

November 1st

“EKG—Ministry Flows from the Heart”

Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16, 1 Timothy 6:17-19

November 8th

**“The Art of Love—Relationships are
Matters of the Heart”**

Psalm 130, John 13:34-35

November 15th

“Bucket Lists”

Colossians 2:1, Joel 2:28 & Matthew 6:33

November 22nd

“Declarations of Your Heart”

2 Corinthians 8:24, John 3:16

November 29th

“HOPE” (Advent begins, Healing Service)

Psalm 25:1-10, Jeremiah 33:14-16