

THE AMBASSADOR

March 2009

“Let’s Take a Walk”

One of the many privileges that come with pastoral ministry is the reality that our calling allows us to walk beside family and friends at significant moments of their lives.

I was reminded of this recently while visiting a friend in the hospital. After a season of conversation, I stood up to bid him farewell and we shared some mutual words of thanks. On this particular occasion though, my work wasn’t done. My friend insisted that we walk the halls as part of his post-operative routine. So, at my friend’s behest, off we went. Two laps around the unit would be our regimen. Once finished, we were back in his room, with smiles on our faces for what we’d shared and accomplished together. It was a good time, because this was God’s time.

I share this story because, in a manner of speaking, all of us have the opportunity to enjoy a good walk. The season of Lent reminds us of the privilege and opportunity that belong to each of us to walk alongside our Savior as we prepare for the resurrection.

You may have traditions that have long been a part of your personal or family spiritual journey during this time. I encourage you once again in this season to join me in reflection and thought about what it might mean for you to walk a bit closer to Christ. Along the way may you discover new meaning and joy as you think about the honor that we have to know God’s love in such a personal way. Perhaps the words of an old hymn say it best:

When we walk with the Lord in the light of his Word,
What a glory he sheds on our way!
While we do his good will, He abides with us still,
And with all will trust and obey.

Inside this month’s *Ambassador* read more about some specific ways you might highlight your journey. I’ll enjoy the walk with you as well!

Regards,

Pastor Steve

Sermon Schedule: March 1- April 12, 2009

Series: Lenten Season and Easter

Scripture Lessons: The Gospel of John

Theme: Close Encounters with the Savior of the World



1: First Sunday of Lent – Communion Sunday (served in the Pews)

Sermon Title: Decisions, Decisions

Scripture Lesson: John 3:1-21

Jesus' encounter with a curious man named Nicodemus leads him toward a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for salvation. Could one man set aside his reputation before others, or would the cost to follow Jesus be too much?

March 8: Second Sunday of Lent – Scout Sunday

Sermon Title: I'll Drink to That

Scripture Lesson: John 4:1-26

In this episode, Jesus allows himself to meet an unsuspecting Samaritan woman at a well. Finding the true love of her life had proven difficult for her – she knew it and so did he. What would this man offer that the others could not? Would she accept his proposal?

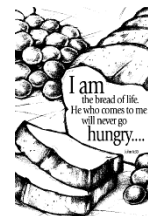


March 15: Third Sunday of Lent

Sermon Title: Some Food for Thought

Scripture Lesson: John 6:25-40

Following a feast for over 5000 guests, a hungry crowd returns to Jesus looking for more. Jesus offers them a second course, but they had never been offered a meal quite like this. As Jesus offers them the invitation, would they graciously accept or politely decline?



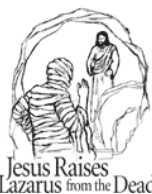
Signs & Wonders

March 22: Fourth Sunday of Lent

Sermon Title: Sight for Sore Eyes

Scripture Lesson: John 9:1-12

The healing power of Jesus in the Gospels is well-known, and many who suffered through life never thought new life would come. If the chance for change comes, would you accept the offer or settle for what you know?



March 29: Fifth Sunday of Lent

Sermon Title: Dead Man Walking?

Scriptures: John 11:1-27

If you've ever found yourself running late, you will appreciate Jesus' visit to Bethany. One of his dearest friends has died because of it. Maybe, just maybe for us, being a bit behind is a good thing....

April 5: Palm Sunday

Sermon Title: Hail to the Chief

Scripture: John 12:12-19

Everybody loves a hero, and Jesus' ministry has found favor with masses in Jerusalem. It seems many are ready to elect him in a landslide victory, but Jesus' victory parade leaves them more puzzled than filled with pride. Find out why this is one leader you'll surely want to get behind.



April 12: Easter Sunday

Sermon Title: When Hope Springs Eternal

Scripture Lesson: John 20:1-18

The promise of Jesus' resurrection changed the lives and hearts of his first followers, who went to the tomb expecting the worst, and instead, they found the best! Come... celebrate the One who lives and gives the greatest life ever!

2009 Holy Week Service Schedule

*All Services Will be
Held
at
Waterville United
Methodist Church
102 North Fifth Street
Waterville, OH 43566*

*For more information
please call
the church office at
419-878-3645*

*The mission of
Waterville United
Methodist Church:*

*The church with a warm heart
devoted to nurture discipleship
by celebrating, teaching, and
sharing Christ's love.*



Waterville United Methodist Church

Sunday April 5 — 10:30 AM
Palm Sunday Celebration

Thursday April 9 — 7:00 PM
Service of Holy Communion

Friday April 10 — 7:00 PM
Good Friday Service

Sunday April 12 — 10:30 AM
Easter Celebration



Theatre-for-the-World
presents
Faith County

Theatre-for-the-World is in full-swing creating our next show for charity and this year we have many exciting changes. Our latest effort entitled Faith County, is a laugh-riot comedy with a Southern twist. This is a smaller show, but the laughs are big and it is family-friendly entertainment. Many of the folks in the cast will be familiar, but we welcome the addition of Terry Myers. Her journey from backstage to center stage took just one year. You could be next?!

Show dates are:

Friday, March 20th at 7:30,
Saturday March 21st at 7:30 (dinner option) and
Sunday, March 22nd at 1:30.

Another change to this year's production is our performance facility. This year we will not be in Grand Rapids, but **we'll be performing in our own sanctuary**. It is a way for us to open our doors to the community and use our church in a whole new way. Thanks to Tom Wiggins, Randy Reihing and the Men's group for their assistance in transforming our performance space for the production.

As you know, we are a mission centered group and all our proceeds go to charity; however, this year instead of just supporting the food pantries we have decided to live up to our name. Of course we will be collecting food donations and money to support both the Anthony Wayne and Otsego Pantries, but since we are "**Theatre-for-the-World**", we would like to deposit 15% of the money collected into an account that would eventually be used to purchase a well in Africa. Future shows would continue to support this cause with a portion of the proceeds until we can obtain this lofty goal. This is simply another way in which God may bless our small gifts to impact people here and around the globe.



Please consider volunteering. We need your help to make our show a success. We are so grateful for your assistance with our past productions and we realize our efforts are futile without the support of our congregation. Would you be willing to usher or collect food at the door? Can anyone bake cookies for intermission or help set-up and clean the refreshment area? We also need help with publicity delivering posters to local businesses or schools? Could you invite a friend or family to join you for the performance? If you'd like to volunteer to help in any of the areas above...please sign the sheet on the bulletin board. We truly appreciate the help. Thank you!

Finally, we thank our youth group for enhancing the Saturday night performance by offering their annual lasagna dinner at 6:30. The cost is \$7-adult and \$5-child under 12. All the proceeds from the dinner will go directly towards the Youth Mission Trip. Please see the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board to reserve seats for dinner or call the office at 878-3645 by March 15th.

Youth Alive! 2009

Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life! John 14:6 We are Alive in Jesus!

- February 1 - No That Sunday Thing
No Youth Alive
- February 8 - That Sunday Thing, 9:00am
Youth Alive, 6:30pm - **Gospel Journey Maui, 3**
- February 15 - That Sunday Thing, 9:00am
Youth Alive, 6:30pm - **Gospel Journey Maui, 4**
- February 22 - That Sunday Thing, 9:00am
Melva, Jerry, and Delores' Diner, 5:30pm
Game Night
- February 28 - **Movie Night for Church - "Fireproof" - 6:00-8:30pm**
Bake Sale - Youth Fundraiser
Babysitting will be provided
- March 1 - That Sunday Thing, 9:00am
Youth Alive, 6:30pm - **Gospel Journey Maui, 5**
- March 8 - That Sunday Thing, 9:00am
Youth Alive, 6:30pm - **Gospel Journey Maui, 6**
- March 15 - That Sunday Thing, 9:00am
Melva, Jerry, and Delores' Diner, 5:30pm
- March 21 - **Youth Fundraiser - Dinner** before the Theater for the World play
- March 22 - That Sunday Thing, 9:00am
Youth Alive, 6:30pm - **Gospel Journey Maui, 7**
- March 29 - That Sunday Thing, 9:00am
Youth Alive, 6:30pm - **Gospel Journey Maui, 8**
- April 5 & 12 - **No Youth Alive - Spring Break**

Events and dates may change so please check the weekly postcards for the most up-to-date information.

Men's Group

The Men's Group met on February 14th and packed care packages for our college students and military personnel. Over 20 boxes were packed and shipped! This is a small way we try to share Christ's love with some of our far-flung church family. Thank you to Brian Schultz for coordinating.

At our February meeting we also invited dads to bring their children and give moms a Valentine Day present of some well deserved rest. Several dads took the hint and came to help. Thank you to Tom Wiggins and Jerry Robinson for manning the kitchen for a terrific breakfast. Thank you to Karl Kirkman and Adam Shelton for manning the crafts room with our kids.

It was also decided that we want to make sure everyone knows we welcome kids anytime they come with dad or grandpa to the Men's Group Meeting.

Chris May was elected Vice President by an overwhelming majority after a hard-fought campaign.

Primary Goal:

Action Oriented – serve Christ, our Church and local families and provide the men in our church multiple opportunities to volunteer in situations that suit their own skill sets and schedules. We understand that not everyone can attend every meeting. But by performing multiple service-oriented projects we give all our men a chance to give the time they can.

Upcoming Projects to Achieve Primary Goal:

1. March 14th – 8:30 am – We ask our men to come help us build the set for the play Faith County which will be performed in our sanctuary. A continental breakfast will be served. Children welcome.

2. Ongoing – God has blessed all of us with talents and gifts. The men would like to share some of our handy skills with those in need. If any of our shut-ins, the church itself, other members, etc have a need please contact the church office. From there the men will coordinate small projects and the necessary workers.

We have projects and events planned for the entire year. God willing – we can achieve them. Watch the Ambassador and bulletins for ongoing updates.

Respectfully
Jason Born



March Birthdays 2009



Day Adults

3	Bobbie Hires	19	Quen Doyle
4	Diana Cox	19	Nancy Michael
5	Janice Battin	20	Aaron Bersee
5	Gary Breymaier	21	Marci Gregory
7	Connie Kirkman	22	Joyce Bruce
7	Cindy Nowak	22	Alison Quinn
7	Judy Thompson	23	Katie Grindle
8	Krista Varner	23	Matthew Ramlow
12	Gordon Cox	24	Marilyn Masola
16	Randy Breymaier	26	Tom Wiggins
19	Cindy Box	28	Mary Breymaier

Happy Birthday to all!

Day Youth

18	Matthew Emashiser
19	Nathaniel Born
19	Alaina Hem
23	Lisa Ellison
23	Lars Ellison
24	Ryan Shelton
27	Teya Marshall



Baptism

Luke William Kirby was baptized on February 15th. Luke is the son of Chris and Sara Kirby. Big brothers are Chase and Seth. Grandparents are David and Ann Nightingale.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Two new Adult Bible Fellowship classes will begin on March 29th at 9:00 a.m.

Faith Lessons on the Promised Land will be a 5-week study. This is an in depth video tour led by Ray Vander Laan on location in Israel.

Faith Lesson on the Death and Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah will be the 2nd study. This is also an in dept study led by Ray Vander Laan and will go for 8 weeks.

No study guide is necessary for either study. Look for the sign up sheet posted on the bulletin board outside the church offices. The Fireproof Your Marriage class will be on hold until further notice.



FAMILY LIFE SKATING PARTY !!!!

Do you have the winter blues? Family life has a cure! Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 7th, 2:30 til 4:30 and be ready to roll with the strobe lights. Our church family will be having a skating party at Swanton Coliseum. We'll have the whole rink to ourselves so our skating abilities can remain anonymous! Please join us and bring friends if you wish. Non skaters are welcome and encouraged as most of us will need all the moral support we can get! Skate rental is \$2.50. If you wish to make a donation toward the rental of the coliseum please send it to Lisa Galton or the church office.

STATISTICS

DATE	WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	GENERAL FUND	CAPITAL CAMPAIGN	MISSIONS	SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
February 1	169	\$4,218.00	\$1,102.00	\$ 60.00	28
February 8	198	4,151.31	2,045.00	80.00	27
February 15	183	2,982.00	1,685.00	43.00	25
February 22	151	3,550.00	2,211.00	60.00	27

Finance Committee Potluck

Sunday, March 29th



&



The Finance Committee wants to keep you informed on our financial situation. Join us for a potluck on Sunday, March 29th after the worship service to be combined with a financial update

February Hospital List



Ron Dalton
Harold Lumley
Chris May
Fritzie Schifferly
Marilyn Simpson
Brian Snyder
Bob Spychalski

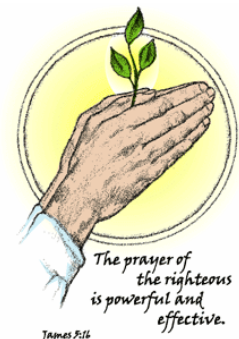


Christian Hope and Sympathy to:

Bob Hires and family upon the death of Bob's brother-in-law, **Everet "Bud" Law** on January 29th;

The family of **Eva Leathers** who passed away on February 22nd in Covington, Tennessee. Eva joined our congregation in 1984 and retained her membership even though she moved to Tennessee over 10 years ago.

PARTNERS IN PRAYER – Pastor Steve would like to be lifted up in your prayers. If you would like to commit to pray for Rev. Rath for a specific week during the coming year, please sign up on the sheets located in the Prayer Corner at the front of the Sanctuary.



Friends in Christ,
Thank you for your prayers. I was moved to tears of joy by the prayer quilt! What a great gift! Thank you and God bless
Chuck Thomas



I wanted to thank the Men's Group for the package that they sent. Thank you for thinking of me and praying for me. It really means a lot. The goodies are really appreciated by me and my friends during this midterm week.

Thank you, Ali Welker



Congratulations to Eric and Becky Varner upon the birth of their daughter, Madelyn Kay Varner, born January 22nd.

SCOUT SUNDAY

We will observe Scout Sunday on March 8th during the worship service, All Scouts (Girl Scouts, Brownies, Daisies, Eagles, Boy Scouts, cubs, Tiger Cubs, Webelos and leaders) are encouraged to attend in uniform and be honored.



Our first gathering has come and gone. Thanks you to Cindy and Doug Box for opening their home and hosting this historic event. Although the night was snowy, we braved the elements for an evening of XYZ Bridge, billiards, ping pong, baby picture guessing, lots of laughter and of course, food, food and more food!

We all thought it was so much fun, we are going to get together again on Saturday, March 14. And this time, we have added music and dancing. We will be going to Hope United Methodist Church in Whitehouse for a fundraiser for the Sunshine Children's Home. The band "Five O'Clock Rush will be playing all our favorite tunes from the 50s and 60s and some square dances also, from 7:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. Cost is \$7.50 per person with refreshments provided. You can get your tickets from our church office or at the door. So we can reserve enough table space, please sign-up on the sheet provided on the bulletin board outside the church office.



And that's not all! Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 18th for a board game night at David and Nancy Stafford's home. Look for more details next month.

These XYZ events are open to anyone in the church 50 years or older. If you would like to host an event, there is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

EASE THE PAIN AND CALM THE FEAR

That's what hospice care provides for people who are facing the end of life. You can be a part of this positive, life-affirming mission right here in your own community as a Hospice of Northwest Ohio volunteer. We are offering a thorough and informative volunteer orientation program at Hope United Methodist Church, Whitehouse, Ohio on Saturday, March, 28th and at Community of Christ Lutheran Church on Saturday, April 4th, from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm (light breakfast and lunch will be provided). Both sessions are required. There is no charge for the training. Want to know more? Call Tim (419-931-3400), Marie (49-931-3195 or Julie (419-931-3275) at Hospice of NWO.



Womens News

KNITTING MINISTRY

Forty-one knitted caps were taken to The Toledo Hospital newborn nursery this month, two afghans were taken to the Sparrows Nest for women who are a part of their new life program, and eight sweaters were sent to Guide Post. So, we really need more hands to knit and crochet new items. It takes a long time for two or three people to knit 40 afghan pieces that will help keep Cindy Nowak busy, as she is the one who put the afghan pieces together (don't want her to forget how to do it). See Karen Longnecker for pattern directions. Yarn is also available. Please consider working on these projects.



LUNCH BUNCH will meet on Wednesday, March 18, at Smedlap's Smithy Restuarant on Farnsworth Road in downtown Waterville. Please plan to join us at 12:45 p.m. for a wonderful lunch and good conversation. If you need a ride, please contact Tehya Collinsworth at 419-878-8616. Will anyone be going down the slide?

SCRAPBOOKING AND MORE... will no longer meet. We will try to start back up again in the fall if there is any interest at that time.



Women, mark your calendars for Tuesday, April 28th. The Women's Ministry will host a spring gathering of all the women of the church. We'll meet at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for a time to get together as a whole group. Look for more details in next month's newsletter and upcoming Sunday bulletins.

Daylight Savings Time Starts Sunday, March 8th

Don't forget to move your clocks ahead before you go to bed on Saturday night!





Scripture and Prayer Calendar

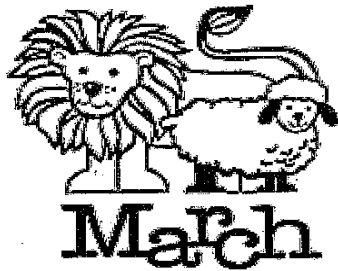
*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come,
they were all with one accord in one place.—Acts 2:1*

<i>SCRIPTURE</i>	<i>MAR</i>	<i>PRAYER</i>
Numbers 3 & 4	Luke 16	1 Mr. & Mrs. Karl Kirkman
Numbers 5 & 6	Luke 17	2 The Glen Lammon Family
Numbers 7 & 8	Luke 18	3 The David Landis Family
Numbers 9 & 10	Luke 19	4 Mrs. Elaine Larimer
Numbers 11 & 12	Luke 20	5 The Jan Launder Family
Numbers 13 & 14	Luke 21	6 The Tom Laurie Family
Numbers 15 & 16	Luke 22	7 Mrs. Eva Leathers
Numbers 17 & 18	Luke 23	8 Ms. Linda Linn
Numbers 19 & 20	Luke 24	9 The Frank Lipinski Family
Numbers 21 & 22	John 1	10 Ms. Karen Longnecker
Numbers 23 & 24	John 2	11 Mr. & Mrs. Chuck Lucas
Numbers 25 & 26	John 3	12 Mr. & Mrs. Harold Lumley
Numbers 27 & 28	John 4	13 The Chris Marshall Family
Numbers 29 & 30	John 5	14 Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Marshall
Numbers 31 & 32	John 6	15 The Bill Martin Family
Numbers 33 & 34	John 7	16 Ms. Marilyn Masola
Numbers 35 & 36	John 8	17 Mrs. Elnora Mathewson
Deuteronomy 1 & 2	John 9	18 The Chris May Family
Deuteronomy 3 & 4	John 10	19 Mr. Elden Mayer
Deuteronomy 5 & 6	John 11	20 Ms. Karen Mayer
Deuteronomy 7 & 8	John 12	21 Mr. & Mrs. Tom McCausland
Deuteronomy 9 & 10	John 13	22 Mr. James McGee
Deuteronomy 11 & 12	John 14	23 Mr. & Mrs. Brian McMillan
Deuteronomy 13 & 14	John 15	24 Mrs. Ann McVicker
Deuteronomy 15 & 16	John 16	25 The Arthur Meade Family
Deuteronomy 17 & 18	John 17	26 Mr. & Mrs. John Michael
Deuteronomy 19 & 20	John 18	27 The Jeffrey Monroe Family
Deuteronomy 21 & 22	John 19	28 The David Morrison Family
Deuteronomy 23 & 24	John 20	29 Mr. Tedd Munn
Deuteronomy 25 & 26	John 21	30 Mr. & Mrs. Ted Myers
Deuteronomy 27 & 28	Acts 1	31 The Clifford Nelson Family



I will pour out my spirit on all people.—John 2:28

Following each daily Scripture Reading are the names of the families and individuals for our daily prayer list. Please read your Bible and pray for these persons for the month of March. If you have a prayer request, please feel free to call the Prayer Chain: Pam Plassmann 419-878-9432 or e-mail plassmb@accesstoledo.com; Mary Williams 419-878-5554 or e-mail margewill@toast.net.



WATERVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

102 NORTH FIFTH STREET

WATERVILLE, OHIO 43566

REV. STEVE RATH, PASTOR

CHURCH OFFICE: 419/878-3645 or 419/878-5225

E-MAIL: watervilleumc@embarqmail.com

FAX: 419/878-4222

PASTOR'S CELL: 419/419-8396

WEB SITE: www.watervilleumc.org

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
March 1 9:00am Bible Fellowship 9:00am Kid's Club 9:00am TST for Jr/Sr Hi 10:30am Worship Service w/ Children's SS 6:30pm Truth Project 6:30pm Youth Alive	2 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #101	3 7:00pm Building Committee Meeting 7:00pm Women's Bible Study	4 9:30am M&M's 5:15pm Kinder Choir Practice 6:00pm Handbell Practice 7:00pm Finance Committee	5 7:00am Men's Bible Study 1:00pm Church Doctor Ministries Round Table 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice	6 7:00am Men's Bible Study 6:30pm Kairos Advisory Council 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice	7 2:30pm Skating Party at Swanton Coliseum
8 9:00am Bible Fellowship 9:00am Kid's Club 9:00am TST for Jr/Sr Hi 10:30am Worship Service w/ Children's SS 6:30pm Truth Project 6:30pm Youth Alive	9 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #101	10 6:00pm Trustees Meeting 7:00pm Women's Bible Study	11 9:30am M&M's 5:15pm Kinder Choir Practice 6:00pm Handbell Practice	12 7:00am Men's Bible Study 6:30pm Kairos Advisory Council 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice	13 7:00am Men's Bible Study 6:30pm Kairos Advisory Council 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice	14 8:30am United Methodist Men's Meeting 7:00pm XYZ Dance at Hope UMC
15 9:00am Bible Fellowship 9:00am Kid's Club 9:00am TST for Jr/Sr Hi 10:30am Worship Service w/ Children's SS 5:30pm Youth Alive 6:30pm Truth Project	16 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #101	17 7:00pm Women's Bible Study 7:30pm Administrative Council Meeting	18 9:30am M&M's 12:45pm Lunch Bunch 5:15pm K C Practice 6:00pm H B Practice 7:00pm Outreach Meeting 7:00pm Prayer Team	19 7:00am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Band Practice 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice	20 7:30pm Theatre-for-the-World	21 Deadline for The April Ambassador 6:30pm Dinner 7:30pm Theatre-for-the-World
22 9:00am Bible Fellowship 9:00am Kid's Club 9:00am TST for Jr/Sr Hi 10:30am Worship Service 1:30pm Thea-for-World 6:30pm Truth Project 6:30pm Youth Alive	23 10:00am Heartland of Waterville Care Service 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #101	24 10:30am Prayer Quilt Ministry 7:00pm Building Committee Meeting 7:00pm Women's Bible Study	25 9:30am M&M's 5:15pm Kinder Choir Practice 6:00pm Handbell Practice 7:00pm S/PR Committee Meeting	26 7:00am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Band Practice 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice	27 7:00am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Band Practice 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice	28 7:00am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Band Practice 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice
29 9:00am Bible Fellowship 9:00am Kid's Club 9:00am TST for Jr/Sr Hi 10:30am Worship Service 11:45am Potluck 6:30pm Truth Project 6:30pm Youth Alive	30 6:00pm Boy Scout Troop #101	31 7:00pm Women's Bible Study				



ALTAR FLOWERS

March 1 - open

8 - open

15 - Steve & Barb Crandall

22 - Tom & Anna Emahiser

29 - open



Written by: Lane Palmer
Position: Youth Ministry Specialist
Answers the question: *Is the Bible really God's Word, and does it really relate to my life?*

One Sunday morning, while sitting next to her first grade daughter in church, a mom noticed her daughter was looking intently at the open Bible in her lap. In a low whisper, she asked, "Did God really write that?" the mom quietly whispered back, "Yes, He did." Looking down at her mother's Bible again, the little girl said in amazement, "Wow! He really has neat handwriting!"

Do you have neat handwriting? 'They' say that neat handwriting is a sign of a neatly ordered life...which means that I'm in a boatload of trouble. My handwriting looks like the attempts of a dizzy two year old with a dull crayon. I'm not kidding - there are doctors who laugh at my handwriting. So if what 'they' say is true, my life must be sloppily ordered.

And, well, it is. Which is OK as long as it doesn't hurt others...which sometimes it does. The sloppiness gets ugly sloppy when it's brought on by sin (i.e. disobeying God).

Perhaps that is true with you as well? No matter what your handwriting looks like, when you let sin creep into your life, it will eventually scribble shame and sadness all over the scene of your life and the lives of others.

Which is why I'm so glad God has neat handwriting. He wrote this book called The Bible (actually it's a collection of 66 books-more on that later), and the 'neatness' goes way beyond the look of the letters to the source of the words. The source of the words of the Bible is none other than God Himself:

All Scripture is inspired by God... (2 Timothy 3:16).

The word 'inspired' literally means "God breathed," and the word picture is one of God breathing the very words into the minds and through the pens of the authors. Some folks like to think that God just 'inspired' the ideas or concepts in the Bible. I am not one of them. Sure, he used the different styles and personalities of the writers, but the end result is God's word, word for word.

But Lane, couldn't *anyone* write a book and put in something like "in case you're wondering, God wrote this..."-so why do I believe that only the Bible is God breathed and not the Koran, the Book of Mormon, or any other "God told me this stuff" book? Simple...because the proof is in the pages. No other work is a collection of 66 books written by 40 completely different authors living on three continents over a period of 1500 years and contains no errors or contradictions. And *as if* that weren't evidence enough, all 66 books containing 774,746 words all tie into one overarching theme: salvation through Jesus Christ.

Speaking of Jesus Christ, the Bible contains over 300 prophecies about Him which were written hundreds of years before He was born and were all literally and completely fulfilled in His lifetime.

Like I said...the proof is in the pages...and because it is, I need to let those God breathed words breathe back into my sloppy life:

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. It is God's way of preparing us in every way, fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

What Paul is saying here is-don't let God's breath go to waste. The Bible was written by the true God, which means His words are truth, and they are truly the only way to 'desloppify' our sin-stained lives. Breathing in the breath of God is an exercise in letting Christ bring order into my chaos and setting me on the path that will bring me the most amazing joy and fulfillment possible.

I think that's pretty neat...don't you?

Head: What you need to know about this truth

The Bible is a collection of 66 'God breathed' books and as such is God's word, word for word.

Heart: What you need to feel about this truth

It is said that some years ago a vessel sailing on the northern coast of the South American continent was observed to make signals of distress. When hailed by another vessel, they reported themselves as "Dying for water!"

"Dip it up then," was the response. "You are in the mouth of the Amazon river."

There was fresh water all around them, and they had nothing to do but to dip it up, and yet they were dying of thirst because they thought themselves surrounded by sea water. The Bible is the only source of truth you'll ever have or need, knowing this

should make you feel incredibly privileged and incredibly responsible to not only quench your thirst for truth, but the thirst of a dying world!

Hands: What you need to do about this truth

Someone once said: An unread Bible is like food uneaten, a love letter never read, a buried sword, a road map unstudied, gold never mined. Instead of thinking "I guess I'll go read my Bible now...", think of it as an opportunity to share in a