



- Worship
- Teaching
- Example

Volume V2  
February 2007

# Lovilia Circuit Writer

*Our mission at the Lovilia United Methodist Church is to show the love of Jesus the Christ to our community through worship, teaching, example and tangible acts of love.*

## Puzzles of Print and Life

Pastor Jill Leveck

A new game is sweeping the nation and challenging crossword puzzles and wordfinds for popularity. Called Sudoku, it demands a logical arrangement of the numbers one through nine so that there are no duplicates across, up and down or in the nine squares that make up the puzzle. A few numbers are given to get you started and, step-by-step, the patterns take shape. It is inadvisable to guess, for one wrong move and the whole game is lost.

I received a Sudoku calendar for Christmas - one new mathematical challenge for each day of the year. I enjoy the fact that as I work with the numbers the squares fill up and I can actually see results.

In life, things are not always so cut and dried. Results are not always forthcoming when we want them or how we want them. In our Christian walk, much of the time growth is slow. Every once in a while an 'aha' moment will come when we (as C.S. Lewis suggests) are 'surprised by joy,' but not nearly as often as we would hope. Usually it's inch-by-inch, little by little, one step at a time.

What's important is that Jesus is with us each step in the journey - not to help us avoid challenges but to triumph through them. When I first began to work the number puzzles, I would make a grid on a separate piece of paper and use my own code to systematically find the solution and then put it 'in the book.' Now I just start right in. Sometimes it's a bit messy but that's okay.

Life, as well, gets complicated and we can't always go back and rework things. That's where forgiveness and God's grace through Jesus comes in. When we seek His help and repent, our mistakes, the black marks on our life, will be cast to the bottom of the sea and forgotten. God knows that there are times when we mess up and has a plan in place to deal with that contingency. All we have to do is ask and keep our eyes on Jesus.

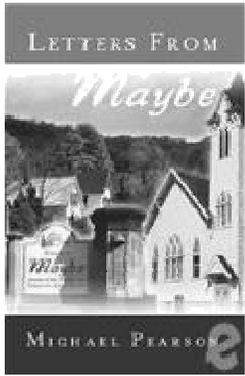
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# Reader's Corner



## Letters From Maybe by Michael Pearson



Get to know the town of Maybe through letters penned by one of her residents to her brother out west. Michael Pearson has written a delightful study of a small town and its colorful group of citizens in *Letters From Maybe*.

Each letter begins with a few words about the pastor's Sunday sermon - they always seem to be too long and full of very little substance. The Elizabeth reports on the goings on in town from the hog 'taking the cake' at the county fair to the pigeons that nest in the church belfry and from the refrigerator magnet museum to the limo ride taken by the pastor and his wife.

Each letter ends with a scripture that speaks to its subject matter and the words "Well, I'd better get this in the mail before Mr. Hurley, the mail carrier, gets here. We're praying for you and your church."

I especially enjoyed the adventures of Carl and his dog Honduras that were threaded throughout the letters that cover a period of four years in the life of the community. The back cover describes the folksy formula as reminiscent of Garrison Keillor's *News from Lake Wobegon*. Pearson certainly gets his message across in a fun and easy going way.

## Mission Minute

*Society of St. Andrew*



This month the Society of St. Andrew will be in the spotlight. With a slogan of "Gleaning America's Fields - Feeding America's Hungry" the group focuses on making use of produce that would otherwise go to waste. According to one of the organization's directors: "Thank God for farmers, deadlines, volunteers, picky buyers, helpful truckers and thankful feeding agencies." For example, in Mississippi the sweet corn crop started to come in faster than it could be shipped to market. So Society of St. Andrew volunteers made sure that 17 tractor-trailer loads of sweet corn reached organizations helping the needy.

The newsletter sent out each quarter tells of events going on around the country and highlights volunteers who are willing to pick and pack so that the hungry will be fed.

Our Ottumwa District will be the recipient of many, many pounds of potatoes from the Society of St. Andrew within the next few weeks. If you would like to help bag them and get them ready to distribute to the needy, contact the district office (641-682-9655) as soon as possible.



## Noah's Ark

Everything I need to know, I learned from Noah's Ark...

1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit. When you're sixty years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
5. Build your future on high ground.
6. For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
7. Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
8. When you're stressed, float a while.
9. Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.
10. No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.

## Parish News

### Pass It On Youth

The weather put a crimp in our plans in January. Our first meeting was called off due to the ice and snow. A letter will go out at the January 28th meeting giving more details on upcoming events and strategies. Hopefully, we can get plans for a weekend work camp at Wesley Woods in motion. Deke Ryder (son-in-law of Max and Diane Maddy, grandson-in-law of Patty Barnhill and great grandson-in-law of Fern Vance) is now interim director at Wesley Woods and we want to pitch in and help him all we can.

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### Shrove Tuesday & Ash Wednesday

Come to the Bussey United Methodist Church and enjoy pancakes hot off the griddle on Shrove Tuesday, February 20th from 5:00-7:00PM. the sausages will be sizzlin' and the fellowship will be unbeatable so come and join us.

On Wednesday, February 21 we will begin our Lenten journey with an Ash Wednesday parish worship service at 7:00PM at the Hamilton United Methodist Church.

### Parish Bible Study

It's not too late to get in on the last few sessions of our Bible Study on the Book of Revelation that meets on Sunday evenings at 6:00PM at the Lovilia Church.

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### Magic Moments on the Way

Our parish will have the privilege of welcoming Frankie and Phyllis Valens for a "Valens-tine" Potluck and concert on Thursday, February 15th at the Bussey United Methodist Church. The potluck supper will begin at 6:00PM. Come to eat good food and listen to two super musical talents and committed Christians. Invite your neighbors and friends to join you. Bring a salad or dessert to share; sandwiches will be provided.

Frankie and Phyllis are looking forward to the home cooking for which our three churches are known. When they shared their witness with us at the Lovilia church, I had the opportunity to sit at their table during the meal. They were especially pleased with the homemade pies. So let's give them a Southern Iowa welcome and fill the Bussey church to overflowing. I know you'll be glad you came.

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### United Methodist Men

Our men have been hard at work preparing wood for more PET Mobiles. Enough for 85 has been cut since the beginning of the school year. Thanks to all of your efforts; eighty-five men, women and children will be given a new chance at life and the effects will be felt in their families and in their communities. You will never know how many lives you have touched.

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### Lenten Bible Study

What do you know about the "Jonathan Factor?" What is the difference between living a life of purpose and adventure and living one of apathy and missed opportunity? If you would like to learn the answers to the above questions and the eight characteristics of the adventurer's heart, come and be a part of our ten week Bible Study "Chasing Daylight" which will begin on Sunday, February 25th at 6:00PM at Bussey and meet weekly (except on Easter Sunday) for ten weeks.

Pick up your workbook at the church if you wish to take part. DVD's will be used as part of each session with discussion following.

# LUMC News

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

### February

- 8 Gary & Karen Lundstrom (A)  
Ed & Linda Weldon (A)
- 9 Jenna Marie Ross
- 10 Gail Hobart
- 11 Norma Jean See
- 12 Dana Lennie
- 15 Amy Howe
- 21 Amber Powers
- 24 Caitlin Conner
- 26 Brent Hugen
- 27 Bill Conner  
Andrew Hastings  
Gayle Hastings
- 29 Jack Hastings

## Kids Club

On Wednesday, February 7th from 5:00-6:30PM all first through fifth graders in Lovilia are invited to have a Close Encounter with Jesus. For twelve weeks we'll examine the life of our Lord and what it was like to live 2,000 years ago.

Again, supper will be served each week. Participants will earn tickets that can be used to purchase gifts at the Close Encounters store. Come and join us and bring a friend or two or three. If you would like to help with a lesson, contact pastor Jill as soon as possible.



Pat Frye, Josie DeLong, Margaret Conner, Donnie Tucker, Thelma Smith, Lois Walter, Dale Allison, Janice Schisel (pastor Jill's mom), our service men and women around the world, our shut-ins and their caregivers, and our leaders.

## Finances

Our offerings in December were \$2,579.25. This included \$280 that was paid for the parish t-shirts and sweatshirts. Our expenses for 2007 will average out to \$2267.45 each month. We paid ten month of our apportionments for 2006. This year let's shoot for fulfilling our obligations 100%.

## That Was Then



### The Early Days

Our roots go deep here in Lovilia. the two churches that intertwine and eventually connect to make the Lovilia United Methodist Church go back to the 1840's when settlers were putting down roots and staking their claims to the land.

The first United Brethrens met in homes, schools and tents whenever a circuit riding pastor came around. Early Methodists held meetings as early as 1857 and were part of the Hamilton circuit. The first recorded baptism was Victoria Rilea in 1864. I wonder if any of her kin are around today.

Do you have letters or old newspaper articles with narrative about those days? If you do, share them with Pastor Jill so that our whole church can enjoy glimpses into our past and slices of our heritage.

## This Is Now



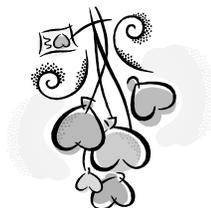
### Parish

Our Lovilia United Methodist Church has spent four and a half years as part of a parish with Bussey and Hamilton - a short amount of time when you consider our long, colorful and faith-filled history. With such a deep rooted past, we have much to which we can look forward in the future.

This month our pastor-parish relations committee worked out a schedule of parish activities for the year that range from Bible Studies to picnics and from Holy Week services to a renewed effort at each church to locate and reach members we haven't seen for a while.

At this church the New Year is an opportunity to reach out to all ages. Kids Club for first through fifth grades begins again the first Wednesday in February. A twice monthly parish youth group is available for sixth through twelfth graders. We plan to initiate a fellowship group for young married couples where they can have fun and deal with issues that are front and center in their lives. It will be a good year. How will you be a part of our "this is now?"





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		7	2		6	9		
	4		5		8		7	

## Sudoku:

*(Read More on Pg. 1)*

The numbers 1-9 must be present in each 3x3 square.

The numbers 1-9 must also be present in each row and column.

(No repeating numbers in boxes, rows or columns)

You can start anywhere...go ahead and give it a try.

**Tip: You might want to use a pencil with an eraser.**

Visit the Lovilia United Methodist Church Online at <http://lumc.webs.com>