

The Hilltop News



FEBRUARY - BLACK HISTORY MONTH

"I ask, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." -John 17:21

*"Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave..."
You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise. ...
Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise."*

-Maya Angelou "Still I rise," (1978)

Every year on February 1, an entire month of events begin that are planned nationwide to honor the history and contributions of African Americans. Now, in case you get all huffy and puffy about having a month set aside just for black history, I am here to remind you that every month is white history month, and I caution you to think about how much black history you were actually taught in grade school, especially if you were in school prior to 1976, when the United States established Black History Month.

Black History Month first originated as part of an initiative by *Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson*, (1875 –1950). He

was an African-American historian, author, journalist and the founder of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. He was one of the very first scholars to study African-American history. He launched Negro History Week in 1926, and proclaimed that it should always occur in the second week of February — between the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

Who was Frederick Douglass?
Some people still aren't sure. Well, he was born a slave in Maryland c. 1818, birth records for slaves were not recorded then. He adopted February 14
(Continued on pg. 2)

FEBRUARY 2018

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Letter continued.....	2
February Mission.....	3
Camp MoVal registration.....	4
Ash Wednesday, Bible Quiz.....	4
Book Club.....	5
Council Contacts, Prayer List.....	6
Pantry Needs, Thank You	6
Calendar.....	7
About Us.....	8

Pastor

Rev. Margaret Diz Philip
Council
Kelly Day, pres.
Stephanie Gelhot, vice-pres.
Neil Glaser, treas.
Kari Winchester, sec.
Dale Konneman, grounds
Janet Moehsmer, bldg. fund
Music Director
June Jones
Custodian
Neil Glaser
Office Admin.
Gail Schneider

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(Continued from pg. 1)

as his birthday because his mother called him "my valentine." His mother was a black slave named Harriet Bailey and his father was her white master. Douglas, influenced by the cruel treatment of slaves he witnessed as a child, became a runaway slave, abolitionist, civil rights leader, social reformer and eventually one of the most influential African American intellectuals of his time. He made history as the first African American to hold a government position and when he was 70, he received a vote for nomination as president of the United States at the Republican National Convention of 1888.

I trust we all know who Lincoln was!

The theme for Black History Month this year is "African Americans in Times of War" to honor the brave men and women who have served our country in the armed forces, especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice while defending the American ideals of freedom and democracy. During World War II, more than 2.5 million black men registered for the draft and one million served as draftees or volunteers in every branch of the armed forces. More than 12,000 black men who served in the segregated 92nd Division received citations or were decorated for "extraordinary heroism" on the battlefield. Perhaps more famously, the Tuskegee Airmen also became legendary for their heroic feats. They received a Distinguished Unit Citation, silver stars, 150 distinguished flying crosses, fourteen bronze stars, and 744 air medals.

James Mercer Langston Hughes was an American poet, social activist, novelist, playwright, and columnist from Joplin, Missouri, and one of the earliest innovators of the literary art form called jazz poetry. He is best known as a leader of the Harlem Renaissance in New York City.

"Let America Be America Again," *(excerpts)*
by Langston Hughes, 1902-1967

Let America be America again.
Let it be the dream it used to be. ...
Let America be the dream the dreamers dreamed—
Let it be that great strong land of love
Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme
That any man be crushed by one above.
(It never was America to me.)

Say, who are you that mumbles in the dark?

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart,
I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars.
I am the red man driven from the land,
I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek—
And finding only the same old stupid plan
Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak.
I am the young man, full of strength and hope,
Tangled in that ancient endless chain

...

Sure, call me any ugly name you choose—
The steel of freedom does not stain.
From those who live like leeches on the people's
lives,
We must take back our land again, America!
O, yes, I say it plain. America never was America to
me,
And yet I swear this oath—America will be!

...

We, the people, must redeem
The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.
The mountains and the endless plain—
All, all the stretch of these great green states—
And make America again!

*From The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes,
published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright © 1994
the Estate of Langston Hughes. Used with
permission.*

Yes! All lives matter, poor, rich, white, red and black
lives matter!

Pray that we may all be one!

*Peace,
Margaret*

FEBRUARY MISSION—ST. LOUIS AREA DIAPER BANK

For our February mission, St. Thomas UCC will host a Diaper Drive in support of the St. Louis Area Diaper Bank, a nonprofit organization that exists to help strengthen low-income families in the St. Louis region by ensuring access to an adequate supply of diapers and by raising awareness about the causes and consequences of diaper need in our community. Our participation will help these families who are unable to provide an adequate monthly supply of fresh diapers for their children. Our efforts in this diaper drive will go a long way to ensuring that these babies get a healthier start in life.

Call to action:

Pick up a package of diapers when you do your regular shopping. (Don't toss those diaper coupons because you think they don't apply to you.)

Bring any size, any brand (and even open packages) to St. Thomas in February and we'll get them to the Diaper Bank! Size 4, 5, 6 and pull-ups are always most needed.

Financial support is also welcome. Make checks payable to St. Thomas UCC and we'll write one check to the Diaper Bank at the end of the month.

St. Louis Area Diaper Bank 2016-17 Snapshot

- 45,000 diapers distributed monthly
- 2,000 children served monthly
- 18 community partner agencies providing diapers to their clients
- Over 100 volunteers contributing over 5,000 hours of service annually
- Grew annual distribution of diapers from 300,000 in 2016 to 550,000 in 2017.

The St. Louis Area Diaper Bank is an organization that seeks to help streamline the collection and distribution of diapers to low-income families in the St. Louis region. With diapers and financial donations collected from the community, the Diaper Bank will partner with existing service organizations to serve families who are most in need of diapers to keep their little ones clean and dry, healthy and happy.

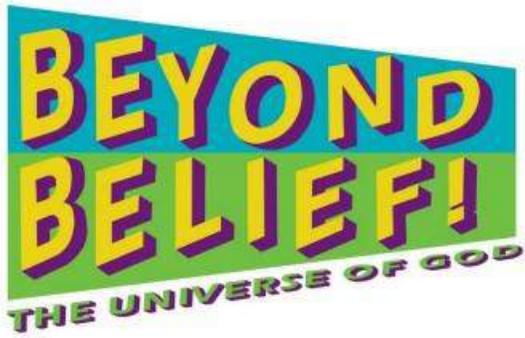
Did you know?

- *You can't buy diapers with food stamps or get them through WIC*
- *22% of all children under five years old in the US live in poverty and 40% of children under five in St. Louis city live in poverty?*
- *If a family can't afford diapers, a baby may spend extended periods of time in the same soiled diaper.*
- *Diapers can cost an average of \$75-\$100 per month and that accounts for nearly 10% of the yearly income of a person living at the poverty line.*

What this means:

- *The severe health and social consequences for babies and families who do not have access to diapers is a bum deal. Lack of diapers can lead to a whole mountain of problems for families in need: unhappy babies, unhealthy communities, under-educated toddlers, and under-employed adults. Something as basic as a diaper can actually have a big impact on a family's ability to become financially stable and self-sufficient!*





The theme for this year's camp is "Beyond Belief, The Universe of God". Campers and participants will explore and learn through opportunities that only the outdoors provide. Having faith is just the beginning. We are on a journey to the far reaches of our faith.

Brochures and registration forms will be available in the Narthex. There are discounts available for many of the camps. Registration must be paid in full by the early bird date of April 1, 2018 in order to receive the discounts. If you have any registration questions, please contact the camp office at 636-583-2730 so we can be of assistance.



**ASH WEDNESDAY
SERVICE
FEBRUARY 14
7:30PM**

BIBLE QUIZ

Paul declares that nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Which of the following does Paul specify as unable to block God's love?



- A. death; life
- B. angels; demons
- C. present; future
- D. height; depth
- E. all of the above

Answer: [See Romans 8:38-39](#)

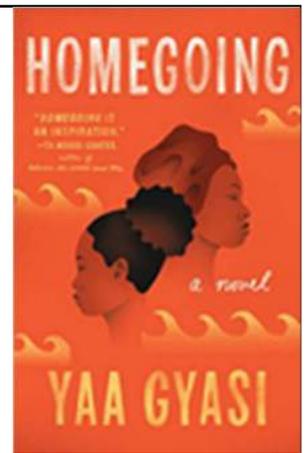


Book Club will not meet in February, but will meet again to discuss the following new read on March 15th.

From School Library Journal

"This sweeping family saga encompasses seven generations of descendants of a Fante and his captured Asante house slave. After giving birth to a daughter, Maame manages to escape, making her way alone back to her own village. She is taken in by an Asante warrior, becomes his third wife, and has a second daughter by him. The two sisters, Effia and Esi, will never meet, their lives will follow very different paths, but their descendants will share a legacy of warfare and slavery. Effia will marry an Englishman who oversees the British interest in the Gold Coast slave trade. Esi will be captured by Fante warriors, traded to the Englishmen, and shipped to America to be sold into slavery. Progressing through 300 years of Ghanaian and American history, the narrative unfolds in a series of concise portraits of each sister's progeny that capture pivotal moments in each individual's life. Every portrait reads like a short story unto itself, yet Gyasi imbues the work with a remarkably seamless feel. Through the combined historical perspectives of each descendant, the author reveals that racism is often rooted in tribalism, greed, and the lust for power. Well researched, beautifully told, and easy to read. It most likely will become a classic read for senior high school classes."

—Cary Frostick, formerly at Mary Riley Styles Public Library, Falls Church, VA



A DIFFERENT BEAUTIFUL

Brenna Westlake, now 5, was born with a condition that makes her skin grow too fast, become thick and inflexible, and look red and scaly. While managing Brenna's complex care and helping her master developmental milestones, her parents have made new discoveries about beauty.

"Sometimes the most beautiful things ... come from the unexpected parts of life that encourage us to search a little harder to find where the beauty lies — to put aside preconceived notions about what beautiful is and what it isn't," writes Courtney Westlake in *A Different Beautiful* (Shiloh Run Press).

"There is a different beautiful than the perfection our culture often worships. That beautiful is found not when we open our eyes but rather when we open our hearts. That different beautiful is found in the uniqueness God has bestowed on every single one of us and the gifts he has placed within us to be shared with the world."

OUR NEW HOME

A preacher who had always feared death felt powerless to comfort others who were facing it. Toward the end of his life, he moved to another house. When all the furniture had been packed, he lingered in the home where he'd raised his children and prepared many sermons. An assistant interrupted those reflections by saying, "Everything's gone, sir, but the new house is better than this one. Come away."

The preacher never forgot this lesson. God has prepared for his children a home infinitely better than earth — "an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands" (2 Corinthians 5:1, NIV).





If you have knowledge of someone on the Prayer List who no longer needs our prayers, please let us know.

Peanut Butter

Jelly

Tomato Products

Canned Chicken

Razors

Bar Soap

Body Wash

Snacks: granola & protein bars, shelf-stable pudding cups, saltines & snack crackers, nuts, raisin & other fried fruits, veggie chips, boxes of microwave popcorn packets (watch the butter, salt & sugar)

While chips, candy, cookies and other snacks considered less healthy are not actively requested, Circle clients are often happy for the special treat of Girl Scout cookies, seasonal candy & other goodies that just taste so good!

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Thank you so much to the members of St. Thomas for the Christmas gift! I hope you all have a wonderful New Year!

Gail Schneider

COUNCIL CONTACTS

President	Kelly Day	314-307-7890 kmday44@gmail.com
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Secretary	Kari Winchester	636-236-7071 k_winchester@outlook.com
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Building Fund	Janet Moehsmer	636-458-1058 jmoehsmer@gmail.com

February 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 *Terry Schott	6 1:30pm Center- ing Prayer	7 No Ladies Guild this month	-	9 *Carol Fyock	10
11 Transfiguration Sunday	12	13	14 Ash Wednesday Valentine's Day	15 No Book Club this month	16 *Ken Hutchinson	17 *Aaron Clark
18	19 Presidents Day	20 1:30pm Center- ing Prayer	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE



Worship: 8:30 (summer) & 10:00 am (all year)

11:00 am Fellowship Time

We are ADA Accessible.

Childcare is provided during Worship.

Office Hours: 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Please call first if you need to stop by!

Office Phone: 636.532.3556

About Us

Mission Statement

We are St. Thomas UCC, a caring faith community welcoming all to share with us. You will find us supportive, nurturing, and encouraging. Our worship is traditional yet contemporary, applying scripture and Christ's teachings to everyday life. Accepting all who come as family, we are St. Thomas UCC.

Value Statement

We are a close-knit welcoming community. We cherish and honor the traditions of our 100 years past. With respect and compassion we work together. We strive to grow in our faith by serving the community. We embrace and celebrate our youth and the promise of each new generation of God's children. We seek God's blessings and wisdom in the joys and challenges of our daily lives. We grow in our understanding of Christ's teachings while being respectful of our differences.

Vision Statement

We seek to :

- Invite others to join in our faith journey
- Explore worship opportunities
- Enhance our fellowship and service outreach
- Expand our use of technology
- Increase our community involvement