

The Christian Griot

St. Luke C.M.E. Church
809 N. Fifth Street

Champaign, Illinois 61820 Phone: 217-356-4922

Rev. Dr. Clarence Buchanan, Pastor
Elder Harlan K. Jones Presiding Elder
Bishop Paul Stewart, Presiding Prelate

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Patricia McKinney Lewis, Editor
Email: patlvjs1123@att.net



Who's Who at St. Luke: Sister Mary Williams, Usher Board President

Rev. and Mrs. Clarence Buchanan

Thanksgiving
Day
Service
11:00 AM



Mary Lou Grussing Williams is the second of three children "given by God" to the late Elmer Louis and Wilma Jean (Pritchard) Grussing. She says "given by God", because she and her older brother were adopted as newborns by their parents, and their baby brother was a "surprise blessing" born to their parents after 20 years of marriage. Her older brother, Allen, lives in Bovina Center, New York and works for IBM. Her younger brother, John, lives in Bellflower, IL, and is a farmer. Her mother also lives in Bellflower.

Mary was born on January 5, 1962 in Gibson City, IL. She grew up on a farm near the community of Bellflower, IL, which is located about 30 miles west of Champaign. She stated, "We worked hard on the farm, but our parents were loving and devoted. They taught us all the value of hard work and the ability to see accomplishment upon completion of your tasks. We all learned to farm from a very young age. I learned to drive tractors, work the ground to be planted, walk beans to cut out the weeds, bale hay, help with the harvest and take care of the livestock right along with my brothers." Mary attended Bellflower public schools, and graduated from Bellflower Township High School in 1980. Mary was co-year book editor, president of FHA, treasurer of my senior class and voted "Outstanding Musician of the Year". It was one of the smallest public schools in Illinois. Her class had 24 students.

She married the love of her life and her husband of 27 years, Larry Lovell Williams on January 16th, 1982 at St. Luke CME Church by Reverend Earl Kennedy. They have been blessed with four children: Athea Janae Williams, Devan Lovell Williams, Amara Renea Williams Godwin (Scott) and Jocelyn Lynnea Williams. Their precious gifts sent from God are their two grandchildren: Tristen Lovell Thomas and Lovay Marie Williams.

She started attending St. Luke because her father-in-law insisted that his grandchildren be raised at St. Luke. She became a member in 1986 when Rev. Kennedy was the pastor. She shared, "This church experience was totally foreign to me. I was born, raised, baptized and later confirmed as a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church (LCMS) in Osman, IL, where my mother is still active. I fell in love with the spirit filled music and inspired preaching that I experienced at St. Luke. I cannot find the words to explain the utter joy and inner peace I've found here. God does indeed work in mysterious ways! "

At St. Luke, Mary has been involved with the children's choir, the Youth of Promise, Board of Christian Education, Pastor's Appreciation and the Senior Usher Board of which she is currently the President.. She feels privileged to be the emcee for programs for the History Committee, including the 100th anniversary program this year.

She is the Co-Director of Human Resources for Colonial Pantry Ltd. as well as the Administration and In House Trainer. She started out as a part-time clerk, to supplement their income, in 1984 and has worked her way up to her current position with them.

She loves to crochet baby blankets and cross stitch Christmas ornaments. Mary spends every moment she can with her grandbabies!

Favorite scripture: Psalm 18: 1-2. Favorite hymn: "Precious Lord, Take my Hand".
Favorite gospel song: "Now Behold the Lamb".

Birthdays

November

- 2 Devan Williams
- 4 Christina Sibley
- 5 Lou Connors
- 6 Ruby Huffman
- 9 Belle Miller
- 11 Timothy Summers
- 12 Lashaundra Lockett
- Erika Williams
- Kashif Lewis
- 13 Robin Smith
- Jan Thomas
- 14 Brittany Barnhill
- 14 Candice Samuel
- 15 Vernon Lewis
- Lisa Hicks Boothe
- 19 Brianna Wright
- 21 Vernessa Macon Hunter
- 21 Neah Harvey
- 22 Tressa Easley
- 23 Patricia M. Lewis
- 24 William Nesbitt
- 26 Amber Kinard
- 28 Brenda Foster
- 28 Carla Samuel Parks
- 29 Tyanna Jones
- 30 Shanice Brown

Thank You Lord For All You Have Done



A Prayer for Today

Father in heaven, thank You for filling me with Your Holy Spirit and for giving me Your authority here on the earth. Today I declare peace over every area of my life and thank You for working things out for my good. In Jesus' Name.



From one pumpkin to another!!!!!!

**A woman was asked by a coworker,
'What is it like to be a Christian?'**

**The coworker replied, 'It is like being a pumpkin.'
God picks you from the patch, brings you in,
and washes all the dirt off of you.
Then He cuts off the top and scoops out all the
yucky stuff.
He removes the seeds of doubt, hate, and greed.
Then He carves you a new smiling face and
puts His light inside of you to shine
for all the world to see.'**

How I Learned to Mind My Own Business

I was walking past the mental hospital the other day, and all the patients were shouting, '13....13.....13.'
The fence was too high to see over, but I saw a little gap in the planks. So I looked through the gap to see what was going on.....
Some wise guy poked me in the eye with a stick!
Then they all started shouting '14....14....14'....

Have a Blessed Thanksgiving Day!

Almost every culture in the world has held celebrations of thanks for a plentiful harvest. The American Thanksgiving holiday began as a feast of thanksgiving in the early days of the American colonies.



In the autumn of 1621, bountiful crops of corn, barley, beans and pumpkins were harvested. The colonists had much to be thankful for, so a feast was planned. They invited the local Indian chief and 90 Indians. The Indians brought deer to roast with the turkeys and other wild game offered by the colonists. The colonists had learned how to cook cranberries and different kinds of corn and squash dishes from the Indians. To this first Thanksgiving, the Indians had even brought popcorn.

1939 President Franklin D. Roosevelt set it one week earlier. He wanted to help business by lengthening the shopping period before Christmas. Congress ruled that after 1941 the 4th Thursday in November would be a federal holiday proclaimed by the President each year.



I dreamed that I went to Heaven and an angel was showing me around. We walked side-by-side inside a large workroom filled with angels. My angel guide stopped in front of the first section and said, ' This is the Receiving Section. Here, all petitions to God said in prayer are received. '

I looked around in this area, and it was terribly busy with so many angels sorting out petitions written on voluminous paper sheets and scraps from people all over the world. Then we moved on down a long corridor until we reached the second section.

The angel then said to me, ' This is the Packaging and Delivery Section. Here, the graces and blessings the people asked for are processed and delivered to the living persons who asked for them. ' I noticed again how busy it was there. There were many angels working hard at that station, since so many blessings had been requested and were being packaged for delivery to Earth.

Finally at the farthest end of the long corridor we stopped at the door of a very small station. To my great surprise, only one angel was seated there, idly doing nothing. ' This is the Acknowledgment Section, ' my angel friend quietly admitted to me. He seemed embarrassed ' How is it that there is no work going on here? ' I asked.

'So sad, ' the angel sighed. ' After people receive the blessings that they asked for, very few send back acknowledgments. ' 'How does one acknowledge God 's blessings? ' I asked.

'Simple, ' the angel answered. Just say, ' Thank you, Lord. '

'What blessings should they acknowledge? ' I asked.

'If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep you are richer than 75% of this world. If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish, you are among the top 8% of the world 's wealthy. '

'And if you get this on your own computer, you are part of the 1% in the world who has that opportunity.. '

'If you woke up this morning with more health than illness You are more blessed than the many who will not even survive this day. '

'If you have never experienced the fear in battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation ... You are ahead of 700 million people in the world. '

'If you can attend a church without the fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death you are envied by, and more blessed than, three billion people in the world. '

'If your parents are still alive and still married ..you are very rare.'

'If you can hold your head up and smile, you are not the norm, you ' re unique to all those in doubt and despair. '

Ok, what now? How can I start?

If you can read this message, you just received a double blessing in that someone was thinking of you as very special and you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world who cannot read at all. Have a good day, count your blessings, and if you care to, pass this along to remind everyone else how blessed we all are.

ATTN: Acknowledge Dept.

'Thank you Lord, for giving me the ability to share this message and for giving me so many wonderful people with whom to share it. '

One Church One School

"It Takes A Village To Raise A Child"



Academic Academy

St. Luke has adopted the Champaign School District's Academic Academy Alternative School for its One Church One School initiative.

Our partnership with this school will be different in that we last worked with an elementary school, and this is an alternative high school established for students who may have difficulty "fitting in" at their traditional high school; may need credit recovery to graduate; or may be parents—primarily single parents who need a flexible schedule.

On October 4, 2009 several staff members attended St. Luke's worship service and fellowshiped with us during the dinner held after the morning worship service. We were very pleased to meet Mrs. Rhonda Howard, principal; social worker, Margie Sitch and her husband, Lou; and Melissa Appleby, a teacher at the Academic Academy.

So far, St. Luke has helped with several Academic Academy projects:

- Provided cookies/baked goods for special events
- Provided speakers to talk about careers and character building
- Donated \$400 for a college tour for senior students
- Donated a gift certificate to purchase children's clothes

At the Academic Academy, students develop educational learning plans that focus on their education, social/emotional, and career planning needs. The Academic Academy offers flexible course scheduling to best meet student needs. The Academic Academy does not follow the traditional semester schedule for coursework.

There are 5 academic sessions built into the Academy's schedule. The student day starts at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. Students will have the flexibility to "block schedule" their day and only focus on three to four courses at a time. If needed, students may have the opportunity for a partial day schedule. During the first school year, 2008-09, twenty-five students graduated from the Academic Academy. The students participated in their home school graduation activities.

Students at the Academy will provide services for senior citizens at the church through service learning projects. Sister Patricia Lewis, a retired school administrator, is the One Church One School Coordinator.



Principal Rhonda Howard and Margie Sitch, Social Worker (Stratton Elementary pictured in the background.)



New Member Baptisms and Christenings
October 11, 2009

Welcome New Members



Carleigh Parks with brother, Lawrence and sister, Logan.



Jemal Dodd with children, Aryanna Dodd, Reyanilla, Dodd and Xavier Dodd



Aryanna Dodd, Reyanilla, Dodd and Xavier Dodd



Tyisha Jones with children Aulaya Doley and Ladaree Doley



Jemal Dodd

MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST



Min. Dion Broughton, Speaker

