

The Christian Griot

St. Luke C.M.E. Church
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Rev. Dr. Clarence and Mrs. Christine Buchanan



Merry Christmas! Jesus is the
Reason for the Season!

Who's Who at St. Luke : Sis. Jean Nesbitt

December

- 1-2 Winter Council
- 11 Men's Day
- 17 Food Pantry
- 18 Christmas Program
- 31 Night Watch

Birthdays

- 4 Marvarine Pirtle
- 5 Evelyn Walton
- 7 Ethel Kennedy
- 7 Dana Cockrell
- 8 Mehadijah Jarumi
- 8 Tristen Thomas
- 9 Dion Broughton
- 13 Lonnie Kinard
- 16 CME CHURCH
- 16 Joyce Cowan
- 17 Xavier Jarumi
- 19 Lovay Williams
- 20 Emmitt Elam
- 22 Tiffany Harrington
- 22 J.W. Pirtle
- 24 Lemond Peppers
- 24 Mark Creighton
- 24 Jennie Sheffield
- 27 Kendell Adams
- 27 Joyce Bradley
- 27 Lawrence Parks
- 29 Dora Jamerson



Sister Jean is one of those quiet, humble workers who would prefer to work in the background and act in a supporting role to others.

Mary Jean Nesbitt, a native of the Champaign, IL, is a member of the Nesbitt family whose roots run deep in the Champaign-Urbana community. She is one of nine children born to Herbert E. Nesbitt, Sr. and Pauline Gillespie Nesbitt. Her siblings are: Clarence, Sandra Nesbitt Martin, Janet Nesbitt, Curtis Nesbitt, William Nesbitt, and Betty Nesbitt Rowell. Brothers: Bruce, Herbert and Ronald are deceased. Her deceased brother, Bruce Nesbitt, has a building named in his honor on the campus of the University of Illinois. She is a product of the Champaign School District. She attended Gregory Elementary School, Edison Jr. High School and graduated from Central High School.

Her parents were members of St. Luke CME Church, therefore, all the Nesbitt children were brought up in St. Luke. Her uncle, King Nesbitt, was an associate minister. At St. Luke, she is a member of the Missionary Society and a former vice chairman of the History Club. She also works on the kitchen committee which prepares the repast after funeral services.

She is the proud mother of one son and a daughter-in-law, Delmar Scott and his wife, Dana. She has one granddaughter, Brittany. Her nieces and nephews fondly profess their love for her cooking and warmly talk about her baking skills. Not only is she a great cook, but she also has the gift of taking simple things and making them into grand pieces of art to behold as they adorn ordinarily plain spaces. St. Luke has been blessed to enjoy her gift of decorating for special occasions over the years.

She is retired from the Microbiology Department at the University of Illinois, and currently works part time at Carle. In her spare time she enjoys reading, decorating and cooking.

Favorite Scriptures: I Corinthians 13:13 and chapters of the book of James

Favorite Songs: "Total Praise" and "Order My Steps"

I'm Spending Christmas With Jesus Christ This Year



I'm Spending Christmas with Jesus Christ this Year

I see the countless Christmas trees,
Around the world below.
With tiny lights, like heaven's stars,
Reflecting on the snow.
The sight is so spectacular,
Please wipe away that tear.
For I'm spending Christmas,
With Jesus Christ this year.
I hear the many Christmas songs,
That people hold so dear.
But the sounds of music can't compare,
With the Christmas choir up here.
For I have no words to tell you,
The joy their voices bring.
For it is beyond description,
To hear the angels sing.
I can't tell you of the splendor,
Or the peace here in this place.
Can you just imagine Christmas,
With our Savior, face to face?
I'll ask Him to light your spirit,
As I tell Him of your love.
So then pray one for another,
As I lift your eyes above.
Please let your hearts be joyful,
And let your spirit sing.
For I'm Spending Christmas in Heaven,
And I'm walking with the King.

~© Wanda Benzke ~

Giving to God Demonstrates Your Faith

by Rick Warren

Honor the Lord with your possessions and with the first produce of your entire harvest; then your barns will be completely filled, and your vats will overflow with new wine. (Proverbs 3:9-10 HCSB)

The purpose of tithing is to teach us to always put God first in our lives. God doesn't need our money. He wants what it represents: our gratitude, our priorities and our faith.

Now look at these verses in Proverbs 3. Do you see where it says, "Honor the Lord by giving him the leftovers of all your income"? You can see that's NOT what it says at all.

It says, "Honor the Lord with your possessions and with the first produce of your entire harvest" We give to God first, before anyone else, right off the top of our income.

And here is the promise: "Then your barns will be completely filled, and your vats will overflow with new wine." You and I are called to give back to God in gratitude, but also as a demonstration of our priorities. And it is a demonstration of our faith in his promises.

In Malachi 3:10, God says, "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse . . ." That means the place where you worship. Then God says, "Put me to the test!" In a sense, he says, "Test me and see how I will bless you for your obedience."

God says he will provide all that you need. He doesn't say he'll provide all that we *greed*, but all that we need.

- Make a list of all the things you want, and identify the things on it that you truly need.
- If you aren't giving to God, start this week. See it as a step of faith, a concrete way to show God you believe in his promises.

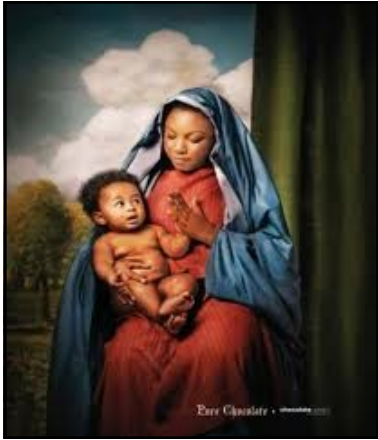


Top 10 Predictions for 2012

1. The Bible will still have all the answers.
2. Prayer will still be the most powerful thing on Earth.
3. The Holy Spirit will still move.
4. God will still honor the praises of His people.
5. There will still be God-anointed preaching.
6. There will still be singing of praise to God.
7. God will still pour out blessings upon His people.
8. There will still be room at the Cross.
9. Jesus will still love you.
10. Jesus will still save the lost when they come to Him.

"Silent Night, Holy Night"

By Bill Egan



Christmas Eve 1818.

In 1818 the carol "Stille Nacht! Heilige Nacht" was heard for the first time in a village church in Oberndorf, Austria. The congregation at that Mid-night Mass in St. Nicholas Church listened as the voices of the assistant pastor, Father Joseph Mohr, and the choir director, Franz Xaver Gruber, rang through the church to the accompaniment of Father Mohr's guitar. On each of the six verses, the choir

repeated the last two lines in four-part harmony. On that Christmas Eve, a song was born that would wing its way into the hearts of people throughout the world. Now translated into hundreds of languages, it is sung by untold millions every December from small chapels in the Andes to great cathedrals in Antwerp and Rome.

Though meant for a performance in a church Silent Night was composed for guitar. That is rather unusual for those days. Joseph Mohr's guitar (right) still can be seen at Hallein's Franz Gruber Museum.

The German words for the original six stanzas of the carol we know as "Silent Night" were written by Joseph Mohr in 1816, when he was a young priest assigned to a pilgrimage church in Mariapfarr, Austria. His grandfather lived nearby, and it is easy to imagine that he could have come up with the words while walking through the countryside on a visit to his elderly relative. The fact is, we have no idea if any particular event inspired Joseph Mohr to pen his poetic version of the birth of the Christ child. The world is fortunate, however, that he didn't leave it behind when he was transferred to Oberndorf the following year (1817).

The Gift of Love

"We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19

During this Christmas season, think about the following:

- Who needs more patience from you?
- Who needs more time from you?
- Who do you need to forgive?
- Who needs your mercy and grace?



What will you do about these things during this season of love?

Sunday School Christmas
Program

December 18, 2011

9:30 AM

Joint Night Watch Service
With Bethel A.M.E. Church

December 31, 2011

10:00 PM

JOSEPH MOHR'S GUITAR - STILL IN THE MUSEUM

The CME Church Mourns the Loss of Elder B.S. Gregg

Reprinted from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel



No single paragraph can begin to capture the Rev. B.S. Gregg and his role in the community.

He was a deeply religious man - no surprise on that for a minister - but what happened in the community and the world was at least as important as what happened in the church on Sunday.

For Gregg, that included welcoming "Freedom" school students to the St. Matthew Christian Methodist Episcopal Church during the mid-1960s. The students and their families were boycotting Milwaukee schools because of continuing segregation and busing issues.

He served in other civic roles, including as chairman on the Milwaukee Board of Review, which considers citizen appeals of property assessments. He did that into his 90s.

"There's no special honor in growing old," Gregg said as city officials and friends celebrated his 90th birthday with a party at City Hall. "I've been given 32,850 days, 788,400 hours, and that's a responsibility. People shouldn't ask how old you are, but what have you done with that time. It's the depth of life, where the roots are; the breadth of life, and the height, meaning your aspirations."

Bertram Simon Gregg survived another 13-plus years to the age of 103. He died of natural causes Oct. 27.

He grew up on a farm in southwest Texas. His father, Robert, died when he was 5. He called his mother, Leah, a courageous woman. She required her eight sons to read, quote and follow the Bible, or suffer the consequences.

"I go to her grave and I stand there, hat in hand, as if I'm going to have to explain myself, have a - what would you call it - military like examination," he told William Janz, a Journal Sentinel columnist, in 1998. "I think she gave me her last \$5 bill, and said, 'Be a good boy,' so I stand at her grave each year, and I ask her, 'How'd I do, mother?' "

Others believed that his mother had reason to be proud.

He married in 1929, still in his early 20s, for love and for life. By then, he was living in St. Louis. He soon felt called to the ministry and was appointed to serve with CME churches.

In 1950, he graduated with honors from the Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis. It was a time, as he later put it, when the only black face on campus was the one he saw in his own mirror.

Gregg and his wife, Zorater, moved to Milwaukee in 1960, when he was assigned to St. Matthew CME Church. He worked for 18 years as pastor before being named presiding elder for the church district.

He also helped establish other churches, in southeastern Wisconsin and elsewhere. It was the kind of job so tough that ministers ended up "with high blood pressure, low blood pressure or no blood pressure," he liked to quip. Jokes aside, it was work he loved to do. "There's a church named after him in Racine - Gregg Chapel CME Church - which he started," said Irene Goggans, a parishioner and friend.

During the civil rights era, he became a founder of Milwaukee United School Integration Committee, known as MUSIC, led by Lloyd Barbee. He did so on principle and not to universal approval.

*Happy 141st Birthday
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
Founded on December 16, 1870*

KNOW YOUR HISTORY!

Griot - A West African Tradition

Editor's Note: I first learned about the history of the griot when I studied African culture, art and the history of the country, Mali, in 1977. About two years ago, Ms. Elizabeth Johnson asked me what the word, griot, means.



Recently, I thought, if she wanted to know the meaning of griot, perhaps others may want to know also. Ms. Johnson, a longtime friend of St. Luke's Sis. Dora Jamerson, is a member of Carter Temple CME in Chicago, IL. PML

A griot (pronounced GREE oh) is a West African storyteller, singer, musician, and oral historian. The griot originated in the 15th century from the Mandinka empire of Mali. Through many centuries, griots have told and retold the history of the empire through generations by keeping the stories and traditions alive.



(The history isn't written down, it is memorized!)

They train to excel as orators, lyricists and musicians.



The griot keeps records of all the births, deaths,

marriages, and cultural tradition through the generations of the village. A griot is very important since the history of a family may never be written down. At times, the griot may be called upon to advise people and even give spiritual counsel.

American writer Alex Haley met a griot in 1966 that had memorized the entire story of the village of Juffure to a date two centuries in the past when his ancestor was enslaved.

When I participated in the African Studies workshop in 1977, a workshop participant was asked to act as the griot each day.
PML



THE LOVE OF GOD

When I sleep in darkness of the night
without knowledge of the world.
Only in dreams I seek to wake
to a bright new day or day of storms, no matter.
I am awaking to another day's journey
it may be my last, but my heart is willing.
This moment has been given to me to live
to see, to touch, to smell, to hear and to speak.
When my eyes open to see the heavenly sky
the golden sun on high, shining bright like a
new-born Life coming forth.
When I can speak words of yesterday
untarnished by time and space.
When I lay in a state of slumber and dreams, without color
I don't fear because my Lord is near.
When I can move my limbs as the day before
with no movement of my body denied.
When I can see the faces of my sons,
the faces of the future.
The face of wisdom and knowledge of days gone by
in the face of my aged father.
Once again I have seen the love of God.
As I walk among my fellowman
there are times when I fear my brothers.
For there are those who would smite me down in the street
and use me and persecute my soul.
But as another day's end
I have walked among my fellowman unharmed.
And maybe loved a little more.
Then I know it must be the love of God
For He is my spiritual vision from earth to Heaven.

Marilyn Dean Cleveland

Editor's Note: Marilyn Dean Cleveland is a resident of Urbana, IL.

Cooking With Noah Brown!

With this being the fall season as well as the Thanksgiving/Christmas Holiday Season, I love cooking and baking around this time! In the near future, I will be making up some of my mama's dressing, some homemade sweet-potato pies, egg-custard pies, and a plethora of different types of cookies. Here are recipes of mine for Oatmeal-Peanut Butter Cookies and my dressing!!

Noah's Oatmeal-Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip Cookies

Makes about 16 cookies

1 cup flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

¼ teaspoon salt

1 stick (½ cup) butter, melted

½ cup creamy peanut butter

½ cup sugar

1/3 cup brown sugar

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

2 eggs

½ cup rolled oats

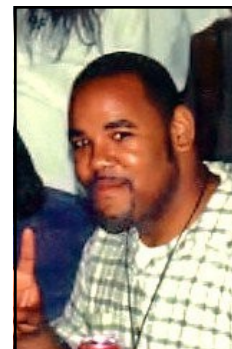
1 bag milk chocolate chips

- 1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees*
- 2. Whisk together the flour, baking soda and salt; set aside.*
- 3. Mix together the butter, peanut butter, granulated sugar, brown sugar and vanilla extract, about 3 minutes. Add the eggs and blend some more. Stir in the oats, then gradually add the flour. and then the chocolate chips.*
- 4. Drop tablespoon size dough onto prepared baking sheets about 2 inches apart. Bake for 10 minutes, or until the cookies are lightly golden. Cool completely on baking rack.*



NOAH'S DRESSING

1 medium/large green pepper
 3 stalks of celery
 medium/large yellow onion
 2 boxes of Jiffy cornbread mix
 2 boxes of Martha White's Cotton Country Cornbread mix
 4 cans of chicken stock/broth
 1 can cream of chicken
 1 can cream of celery
 1 can cream of mushroom
 1 pound/tube Jimmy Deans or Bob Evans sausage
 poultry seasoning
 season salt
 garlic powder
 onion powder
 ½ teaspoon of sage



Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Bake cornbread like on the box.

While cornbread is cooking, dice pepper, celery, and onion finely. Sauté them in a pan with butter or margarine .

Add sausage, and cook like ground beef. Drain all when done (sausage brings out the flavoring, and when grounded good, you can't tell it's even in the dressing)!

In a large mixing bowl, combine cooked cornbread, chicken stalk, and cream of chicken, celery, and mushroom. Mix until batter looks like pancake batter.

Add sausage, pepper, onion, celery mix. Add 3 tsp. of garlic powder, 3tsp. season salt, 2 tsp. poultry seasoning, 3tsp. onion powder, and the sage. If needed, season more to taste. Mix well.

Pour into 2 baking pans (thin layer; bake (like cake) for 25 minutes. Stick a fork in the middle. Dressing is done when fork comes out clean.