

Together we can plan to succeed

By Jean Brindel, Capital Fund Team
North Indiana Outdoor Ministry Project
jbrindel@sbcglobal.net

The 2006 North Indiana Annual Conference requested a feasibility study about the ability to raise money for upgrading and building facilities for the camping ministry. During these past months, the costs of the project and needs assessment has caused the focus to be on the Epworth Forest Camp site.



Brindel

The actual report will be received from the consulting firm, Cargill and Associates, on April 11. This begs the question, what is a feasibility study?

Let me tell you a story.

Back in the olden days, a few weeks before Easter, children would begin to watch the old hens to see where there might be hidden nests of eggs that could be found for Easter. My Uncle Wes, who was about eight at the time, spied an old hen who each morning quietly wandered off from the henhouse to her secret nest.

She would approach the side of the barn, slowly look around, and making sure she was not being watched before slipping between the loose boards of the barn. Wes knew there must be a full nest of eggs waiting for him.

Early in the morning on the Saturday before Easter was his chance to gather those hidden eggs. As he picked up the egg basket, his mother asked him what he was doing. "Nothing," he replied, "just going out for a walk."

He followed the path to the loose boards, just as the old hen had done.

Putting down the basket, he pushed back the loose

boards and crawled under the barn toward the nest. About four feet in, he realized he was caught. He couldn't move. Something took hold of him and held him tightly. He began to scream, but no one could hear him or knew where he was.

After an hour or so, his mother went to the porch and called out his name – no response. She wandered toward the barn, calling for him and stopping to listen. Still nothing. Then she spied the basket, sitting by the opening of the barn made by the broken boards. As she knelt down and looked in to see, his tear stained face pleading for help, she tried to reassure him,

"Don't worry, son, we'll get you out even if we have to burn down the barn." Now, they really needed a feasibility study.

A feasibility study measures the support of the leadership and possible donors toward the proposed project and the project costs. Planning to succeed means measuring the support of possible donors as leaders and donors consider the costs and benefits of the project.

They did get my Uncle Wes out. My dad came along and realized Wes's pants were caught on a nail. And yes, they did get the eggs for Easter.

In May, the results of the Epworth Forest feasibility study will be shared.

Thanks to all who provided ideas, wisdom and concerns in this process. And yes, together we plan to succeed.

Jean Brindel, CFRE, AFP, serves as senior pastor of Saint Matthew United Methodist Church in Frankfort, Ind.

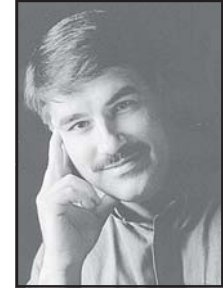
In May, the results of the Epworth Forest feasibility study will be shared.

BODY, MIND & SPIRIT

Did Jesus cook?

By Todd Outcalt
toutcalt@calvaryunited.org

I don't know how many of my male counterparts do the cooking in their homes, but ever since my wife started working longer hours, I've been doing the bulk of the boiling and baking. It's not a bad gig, actually, if you can buy enough cans, jars, boxes and frozen entrees to get by for a couple of weeks at a time. My two teenagers complain, but hey, I'm the dad and I call the shots in my kitchen.



Outcalt

Lately, however, I've been pondering the question: Did Jesus cook?

The Gospels do tell us that he broke bread on several occasions, at least once feeding a multitude. We can reasonably assume that he may have also gone fishing with the Zebedee clan and that he did enjoy a good meal when he was invited to a wedding or to someone's home. But he didn't own a stove and, since he had no place to lay his head, I gather that he didn't have a stone to grind with or to bake on.

But did he cook? I have to think so.

Being close to Jesus in the kitchen had to be one of the reasons my grandmother hummed hymns while she cooked, or why we say table blessings. There's something significant about Jesus and food — even the preparing of it. That's why we set a table on a Sunday morning and invite the world. Jesus and cooking naturally go together.

Of course, Jesus had a much

different diet than we do. He was likely heavy on the nuts and berries and breads, short on complex carbs and protein. He didn't eat burgers and fries. He didn't have to rely on bottled water to know that he was getting pure refreshment.

Still, Jesus may have carried food with him (a bag of trail mix?) and the only reason he needed for getting together with good friends was the food itself. I think he would have enjoyed my chili. He would probably have used copious shots of Tobasco.

The next time you are in the kitchen cooking, consider Jesus. It's amazing, but I often find myself praying for people while I stir the broth, or humming some tune, while I sweat over the pork chops, which, I assume, Jesus would have eschewed. When I serve up the meal and my kids complain, "Hamburger Helper again?" I am practicing the ancient art of patience and suffering for the sake of Jesus. When I taste what I've cooked, I suffer all the more. My cooking has brought our family closer together and filled us with gratitude for Papa John's and Taco Bell. Every meal is an adventure, and we have to trust that the Lord will save us.

But then, I'm probably not telling you anything you don't already know. Happy cooking!

Todd Outcalt serves as senior pastor of Calvary UMC in Brownsburg, Ind. His new blog is toddotcalt.blogspot.com and some of his latest writing can be found in digital form on www.Amazon.com.

We need to make decisions about end of life

By Cyndi Alte
calte@clarian.org

How about these as conversation starters for your next family/church/social gathering:

- ◆ If you could not make decisions about your health care, who would make them for you?
- ◆ What values do you consider as you contemplate end-of-life issues and decisions?
- ◆ Where do you keep documents and information about your health care preferences? Do you have those documents? Is your family and medical team aware of your preferences?



Alte

Sound far-fetched? Not really. These and other significant questions remind us that life is fragile — and that we can begin planning now for the possibility that decisions about our lives may be made by someone other than ourselves.

April 16 is National Healthcare Decisions Day, an initiative to encourage patients to express their wishes regarding healthcare to their families and medical team. It also serves as a reminder for providers and facilities to respect those wishes, whatever they may be.

The Federal Patient Self-Determination Act requires that all Medicare-participating healthcare facilities inquire about and provide in-

... decisions about our lives may be made by someone other than ourselves.

formation to patients on Advance Directives; it also requires these facilities to provide community education on Advance Directives. All healthcare facilities are required to:

- ◆ Provide information about health care decision-making rights.
- ◆ Ask all patients if they have an advance directive.
- ◆ Educate their staff and community about advance directives.
- ◆ Not discriminate against pa-

tients based on an advance directive status.

In studying end of life decision-making, the Pew Research Center found that

- ◆ 42 percent of Americans have had a friend or relative suffer from a terminal illness or coma in the last five years and for a majority of these people and 23 percent of the general public, the issue of withholding life sustaining treatment came up.
- ◆ An overwhelming majority of the public supports laws that give patients the right to decide whether they want to be kept alive through medical treatment.
- ◆ By more than eight-to-one, the public approves of laws that let terminally ill patients make decisions about whether to be kept alive through medical treatment.

One of the most striking changes between 1990 and 2005 is the growth in the number of people who say they have a living will — up 17 points, from 12 percent in 1990 to 29 percent now.

Another study found that between 65 and 76 percent of physicians whose patients had an advance directive were not aware that it existed. All the more reason for families to be involved in our decision making process.

For more information about advance care directives, log on to: www.clarian.org/portal/Education click on "A" and go to "Advanced care directives."

Cyndi Alte serves on the pastoral care team of Clarian Health at Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. She is a clergy member of the South Indiana Conference.

Pontius' Puddle

