



THE VISITOR

February 2012

LENTEN STUDY *The Lord's Prayer*

You are invited to join Pastor Gehres in a Lenten study and discussion of the Lord's Prayer. This study is titled, Becoming Jesus' Prayer, and examines how our lives are transformed through the Lord's Prayer.



We pray this prayer every Sunday; some of us recite it every day -- what is it that we are praying? What are these brief phrases praying for us, and saying to us? How are they forming our lives? We will explore these questions. Sunday sermons during this time will focus on the petitions within the Lord's Prayer, hopefully adding to our discussion.



We will meet on five Tuesday evenings during Lent, starting February 28, from 7:00 - 8:00 pm. Obtain a study book (\$10) from Shirley Weyrauch or the church office and read chapter 1 to prepare for the first session.

ASH WEDNESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER AND WORSHIP

Join us on Wednesday evening, February 22, for our traditional pancake supper and worship! Dinner will begin at 6 p.m. and includes pancakes and toppings, ham, fruit and beverages. Donations are accepted to cover meal costs. Worship will follow at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary and includes the imposition of ashes.

February Worship

February 5

Chancel choir

Text: Mark 1:21-28

Sermon: "Doubts & Darkness"

February 12

Bell choir

Chancel choir

Love Offering

Text: Mark 1:40-45

Coffee Hour

February 19

Contemporary ensemble

Carol choir

Chancel choir

Gospel: Mark 9:2-9

Sermon: *Lord's Prayer,*

"Our Father, Hallowed"

Potluck lunch

February 22 *Ash Wednesday*

7:00 pm Service

Imposition of Ashes

February 26

Hand Bells

Chancel choir

Gospel: Mark 1:9-15

Sermon: *Lord's Prayer,*

"Kingdom Come"

Memorial Gifts

In Memory of Martha McCartney

Gene Horst

In Memory of Merle Moser

Lee Nussbaum

John and Marilyn Schantz

Lorraine Zimmerman

Love Offering

Our annual Love Offering will be collected during worship on February 12. This year's offering will benefit Hope Homes, Crossroads, Habitat for Humanity, and Chapel Hill. Please give generously.

Meanderings

No matter how efficient we are at boxing up Christmas, there seems to be little time for rest and recuperation from our celebrating. Indeed, the real excitement is suddenly just ahead.

Jesus does not ease his way into ministry; it's full throttle. He comes out swinging. "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand" is the message with no warm-up-the-crowd anecdotes or getting-to-know-you period of time. As Mark's Gospel tells it, Jesus just bursts onto the scene and goes at it. He calls ordinary people to be disciples with an abrupt "Follow me".

Do you suppose there were some who declined the invitation, ignoring the imperative? Did the first twelve people all say *yes*? How many did Jesus have to call until he filled the slate? I can imagine some responding, "Well, if you cannot find anyone else, then come back and ask me." Or, "I really can't this year; maybe another year I could leave everything behind and follow you."

It's that *leaving everything behind* part that gets in the way. Peter and Andrew immediately left their fishing nets, tools of their trade, and followed Jesus into a new vocation. James and John walked away from boat and nets and their father to become Jesus' disciples. On the other hand, a rich young man later refused to first give away his wealth and then follow Jesus. He wanted it both ways, and I can't say that I blame him.

Evidently, to wholeheartedly follow Jesus involves leaving behind at least part of our present life. That goes even for those who have grown up in the church and in Christian homes. Following Jesus implies there are ever about us things we need to put aside, give up, and leave behind -- wealth, opinions, beliefs, loyalties. What are yours? *What is holding you back?*

Some folks worry whether they will be left behind when Jesus comes again. The more immediate question: what are you unwilling to leave behind in order to follow him now?

Randy

Christian Education Matters

SUMMER CAMPS! The summer camp brochures should be mailed soon to those who have attended camps recently. We will have extra copies available at the church, and you'll be able to see all the details and complete online registration at the Outdoor Ministries website at www.ocucc.org mid-February. Most camp prices have not increased this year, and there is one rate, no matter when you register for camp. BUT...to be assured of getting into your first choice, register early! As an additional incentive to register early, you'll also receive a special "camp pack" with free goodies that will enhance your camp experience if you complete your registration before March 31st. Our Christian Education committee will pay up to \$200 of each camper's fees. Additional assistance is available based on financial need. See Shirley with any questions!

LECTIO for LENT - beginning Ash Wednesday, February 22nd

We are going to try something different this year for our Lenten devotionals. You will find enclosed in this newsletter a small glossy bookmark titled "The Teachings of Jesus - Daily Bible Readings for Lent." Beginning on Ash Wednesday, and concluding on Easter Sunday, there is a daily reading listed. Along with the readings, we will be practicing a very old Bible reading tradition called "Lectio Divina" - Divine Reading. There are four steps to Lectio Divina: lectio (reading), oratio (hearing), meditatio (praying), and contemplatio (contemplation). Here is how to do it. Settle yourself comfortably in a place that is quiet and where you will not be interrupted for a while. Light a candle if you wish. Take several deep breaths to quiet your body and mind. Then:

- 1) Read the scripture slowly and attentively either silently or aloud, if you prefer, listening for the "still, small voice of God" to give you a word or phrase that is God's word for you today.
- 2) Once you have a word or phrase, ponder it in your heart as Mary did. Repeat it, memorize it, think about it, roll it around in your mind, allow it to interact with your thoughts, hopes, memories, and desires.
- 3) Pray with the word or phrase. Have a conversation with God about what this means and what God intends for you through it. Give your concerns and distractions to God.
- 4) Finally, simply rest in God's presence. You will get to a time where words are no longer needed and you can just enjoy being with the God who created and loves you.

Close by offering thanks to God for this time.

If you would like a more detailed description of the practice of Lectio Divina, see the website at <http://srsclare.com/practice-of-prayer/lectio-divina/lectio-divina-fr-luke/>
I wonder what God may do through us as we all read and pray the scripture together during this season of Lent?

Sarah Circle

Sarah Circle will meet, weather permitting, on Wednesday, February 8th, 1:30 p.m. at the church. Billie Bottomley will serve as hostess.

Care Ministries Cabinet

Care Ministries Cabinet will meet Monday, February 6, at 1:00 p.m. in the Conference room. Let's see all those involved present.

Preschool Registration Begins

Christ Church Community Preschool is now taking applications for the fall 2012-2013 preschool year for 3 to 5 year olds and pre-kindergarten. Call to sign up your preschooler. For information, call Teri Thomas at 330-683-0735 or the church office at 330-683-0715.



YOUTH CORNER

Kid's Club continues! We have 16 kids faithfully attending each week. Come down to the Lower Room and experience the energy. Better yet – come down to the Lower Room and lead a lesson. You can choose a favorite Bible story or ask Sharon for resources. Don't wait too long – we only have nine more sessions this year.

Super Bowl Extravaganza will be held at Matt Diehl's home this year. Bring a snack to share, a friend and a chair. Beverages and pizza will be provided. We'll gather at 6. Wear your team colors!

Junior High Retreat (grades 6, 7, 8) at Pilgrim Hills – March 3-4. Cost will be \$25.

The registration materials are not yet available. Andra Moran (Nashville singer/song writer and well-known Disciples of Christ/UCC person) will be the leader this year. If you are interested please see Sharon.

Mentor/mentee activity – Euchre Tournament February 19 in fellowship hall (all youth are invited). Bring a snack food to share. Don't know how to play? We'll set up a beginner's table and teach you.

Day of Caring in Medina on April 21. It will be a day of community service. Lunch will be provided (as well as a tee shirt). Christ Church will cover the cost. Please let Sharon know if you are interested.

National Youth Event, July 10-14 at Purdue University for those currently in grades 8-12. All registration material and information is on-line at www.ucc.org/youth. You must be registered and have forms to Sharon by March 1. Late forms will be returned. Please don't wait until the last minute.



Financial Report

December 31, 2011			
	Month of	YTD	Last Year
Current Fund	Dec. '11		
Income	\$28,113	\$264,181	\$250,287
Expenses	\$22,515	\$263,781	\$254,281
Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 5,598	\$ 400	\$ (3,994)
Benevolent Fund	\$ 6,469	\$ 44,382	\$ 41,755
Pastor's Emergency Fund	\$1,121	\$ 7,655	\$ 7,250
Advent Offering	\$2,849	\$ 2,849	\$ 2,123
Veterans of the Cross	\$2,329	\$ 2,414	\$ 2,082

What and amazing, generous response! The deficit has been eliminated and we ended the year with a surplus of \$400.00!

Brian Amstutz, Treasurer

Consistory Minutes – Jan. meeting

- Fellowship Committee reported that the Daughter's Event will be held February 4.
- Technology Committee is working with Armstrong to broadcast church services. Eight churches are currently involved in the project, so services from CUCC will be on the air every 8 weeks.
- Several applications for scholarships for the Nursery School have been made.
- Friendship Meals is expanding their program to Monday as well as Thursday.

Relay for Life Soup & Eggroll Sale

Christ UCC Relay for Life team will be having a soup & eggroll sale Sunday, February 5th. Homemade soups (\$6 quart & \$3 pint) and eggrolls (\$7.50 per half dozen) will be available. We would be happy to take pre-orders so you can get the soup you want. To pre-order, please send an e-mail to Diana Huffman at dhuffman5@neo.rr.com, or call Linda Combs at 683-2057 or Diana Huffman at 330-421-9202, *no later than Wednesday, February 1st.* **If you want eggrolls, please pre-order. Thank you!**

SW White Chili	___ Qt	___ Pint	Chicken w/ Wild Rice	___ Qt.	___ Pint
Mushroom Barley	___ Qt.	___ Pint	Broccoli Cheese	___ Qt.	___ Pint
Ham & Bean	___ Qt.	___ Pint	Potato	___ Qt.	___ Pint
Cheeseburger	___ Qt.	___ Pint	Hamburg Vegetable	___ Qt.	___ Pint
Chili	___ Qt.	___ Pint	Eggrolls	___ 1/2 dozen	

Thank You

I am very grateful for the prayers, visits, cards, calls and food that my church family provided during my recent surgery and recovery. Thank you Randy for your visits and prayers. Everyone's support has helped me greatly. Thank you,

Marilyn Polivka

Dear Members of Christ Church,

We members of the Turning Point Coalition thank you for the \$100 from the Endowment fund. Your donation helps us in our mission of keeping youth alcohol, drug, and tobacco free. As we have the past several years the money will be used for expenses for the prom assembly program in May. With gratitude,

Orrville Turning Point Coalition

Thank you to everyone for the cards, calls and visits after my recent fall. Also thank you to the Merry Cooks for the delicious meal. I'm on the mend at home and hope to be back in church soon. Thanks again,

Hannah Gavin

I wanted to say thank you to all who keep my family and I in your thoughts and prayers. I greatly appreciate all the cards and letters that were sent over the holiday season. I thank Randy for visiting and everyone that has been supportive of my family and I. Again, thank you all very much. I greatly appreciate it.

Tim Gresser

Dear Merry Cooks,

Thank you for the delicious dinner you made for me and my family last week! We really appreciated it. Katie Johnson

Stewardship Message

Stewards of Our Relationship with One Another

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself. – Luke 10:27

We belong to God; we belong to one another. In his book, *Reaching Out*, Henri Nouwen tells of a reunion with a former student, an experience that revealed to him the meaning of community: “It is the Christ in you, who recognizes the Christ in me... From now on, wherever you go, or wherever I go, all the ground between us will be holy ground.”

During February, let us walk on holy ground, practicing the radical hospitality Jesus modeled. Starting with our most personal and intimate relationships and moving through expanding circles – of friends, relations, church family, co-workers, and others with whom we come in contact – we tend to the quality of our interaction in these relationships using spiritual practices of forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, openness, honesty, hospitality, shaping communities. We widen our circle, reaching out to unknown neighbors through local and ecumenical service organizations and UCC programs and networks. We participate in the One Great Hour of Sharing special mission offering, typically promoted in churches during February and received the first Sunday in March. As centers of hope and transformation, local churches guide people onto holy ground.

A message from Stewards in the Household of God: a Resource for Holistic Year-round Stewardship available from United Church of Christ Resources.



February Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

2/01 Mark Clark	2/13 Russ Davidson	2/23 Zola Craver
2/02 Linda Smucker	Cindy Zimmerman	2/25 Carol Jones
Connie Reynolds	2/14 Mary Woodward	2/25 Karen Herr
Tom Baer	Judy Miller	2/26 Colin Abel
2/03 Jim Nelson	Doug Wade	2/27 Mark Gehres
Lee Wade	Laura Allard	2/27 Katelyn Malcuit
Richard Blondeaux	Joseph Weeman	
2/04 Dorothy Hahn	Matthew Weeman	
Ginny Moser	Lillian Louanglath	
2/05 Emogene Erwin	2/15 Kurtis Sprowls	
2/06 Sandy Amstutz	2/16 Kimberly Musser	
Brian Orosz	2/17 Rosemary Yungen	
2/07 James Hahn	Gordon Maupin	
2/08 Randy Gehres	Sally Hershey	
2/09 Paula Kohler	Joshua Smith	
2/10 Corey Midura	2/19 Krista Musser	
2/11 Ellen Clark	2/20 Roland Gavin	
2/12 Richard Jones	2/21 Audra Simmavanh	
Traci Williams	2/22 Ralph Hiltabidle	
Jaron Browne	Ruth Harrington	
Antonio Mangano	Bob Weeman	
Logan Boggs		

Anniversaries

2/01 Bruce and Rhonda Weeman
2/12 Al and Carol Yeagley
2/13 Carl and Dorothy Weidman
Bob and Linda Ballentine
2/14 Robert and Karen Markley
2/19 Dave and Judy Browne
2/28 Jeremy and Chelsey Fry



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<h1>February</h1>			1 5:00p Kid's Club 6:30p Carol Choir 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Chancel Choir	2	3	4 6:00p Daughters Event
5 9:00a Sunday School 10:15a Worship 11:30a Parish Nurses—BP's 5:00p Confirmation 6:00p YF—Super Bowl Party	6 1:00p Care Ministries Cabinet 7:00p Spiritual Council	7	8 1:30p Sarah Circle 5:00p Kid's Club 6:30p Carol Choir 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Chancel Choir	9	10	11
12 9:00a Sunday School 10:15a Worship 11:30a Coffee Hour 5:00p Confirmation	13 7:00p Consistory	14	15 5:00p Kid's Club 6:30p Carol Choir 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Chancel Choir	16	17	18
19 9:00a Sunday School 10:15a Worship 11:30a Third Sunday Potluck 5:00p Confirmation 6:00p Mentors/Youth— Euchre Tourney 6:00p Brenn-Field Service	20	21	22 Ash Wednesday 5:00p Kid's Club 6:00p Pancake Supper 6:30p Carol Choir 6:30p Bell Choir 7:00p Ash Wednesday Service 7:30p Chancel Choir	23	24	25
26 9:00a Sunday School 10:15a Worship 5:00p Confirmation 6:00p Youth Fellowship	27 7:00p Healing Service	28 7:00p Lenten Study	29 5:00p Kid's Club 6:30p Carol Choir 6:30p Bell Choir 7:30p Chancel Choir	<h1>2012</h1>		