

St. John's

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

the **Visitor**

Sunday Schedule:

Worship 10:00 am

Church School 10:00 am

Fellowship 9:00am

Office Hours:

Monday -Friday

8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Saturday

9:00 am to 12:00 noon

Telephone:

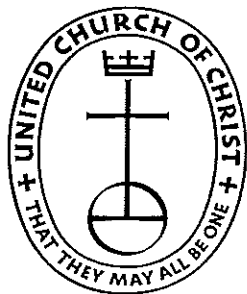
859-431-1818

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Email:

stjohnsucc@stjohnsuccnewport.org



February 2012

Volume 95 Issue 2

The Body of Christ

A Series of Special Services for Lent

February 22 – Ash Wednesday – 7:00 pm

Lent begins with the ancient service of penitence, confession, silence for personal prayers, the imposition of ashes and holy communion.

Dinner at 6:00 pm Fellowship Hall

Week by week God's people, who are the Body of Christ in God's world today, are invited to meditate thoughtfully on the human body with which our Lord first brought God's saving love to the world:

Wednesdays 6:30 – 7:00 pm Sanctuary

February 29 – The Hands of Christ to help and heal +

March 7 – The Eyes of Christ to see our needs +

March 14 – The Heart of Christ beating with love +

March 21 – The Feet of Christ to lead the way +

March 28 – The Mouth of Christ to speak God's Word +

Each and Every week during Lent a hot meal will be served in Fellowship Hall at a modest cost. Plan to join us for food and fellowship at 5:30 pm before we worship during the 40 days of Lent.

Dear Friends,

On January 8th several young people of our congregation stood before God, their families, friends and members of the worshipping congregation to reaffirm their baptism vows. It is wonderful to welcome these young people into fuller fellowship with the church!

It had been their choice to write a faith statement and then to offer their personal statement of faith publicly in the sanctuary on the last evening of their formal class. The Sunday afternoon Rite of Confirmation was an inspirational experience for all of us as we live in a day when church membership and participation are no longer assumed in society, particularly from youth.

Thank you to the parents, extended families, and others close to the confirmands who provided the majority of their Christian education to this point. So, now what happens? I've discovered that teens are concerned with current events, relationships, achieving good academics, friends, and what's for dinner. In many ways, teens today are closer to adults in their attitudes and values than was true twenty-five years ago.

We've invested a lot in our Confirmation Program with the River Valley Cluster of UCC churches, so where can we go with our ministry to teens? What positive outcomes will come from their confirmation day?

First, when teens participate in the life of a congregation, it does them a world of good, and also helps their families and schools. Religion is good for teens by helping them make good, positive value decisions. It reinforces honesty, integrity and peaceful solutions.

Second, I've said this over my entire career of Christian ministry, and it is as true today as it was when I started: parents are still the single most important influence in their children's lives. This implies that we need to invest in parents as well as in youth with parenting classes, support groups, and educational classes that will help parents teach their kids about Christian faith if they are unable to articulate their own.

Third, youth ministry must be a high priority with paid, trained youth group leaders, **and** parents actively involved in the teen programming. A church building and congregation must be seen as teen friendly and welcoming.

Fourth, because of our less frequent access to our teens, youth ministry must be intense and personal, filled with meaningful experiences with caring adults who genuinely care.

Walking high school hallways can be a scary experience, just ask my wife Debbie who teaches at Scott High School in Taylor Mill. Cell phones, texting, tattoos, pierced everything, and clothes express "individual creativity." We long to understand what is going on behind what we see on the outside. Adults are often mystified by today's youth. What to do? Faithfully support the Confirmation and Youth Program of the RVCC!

Faithfully,

Steve

Confirmands Affirm their Baptism

We offer a warm welcome into membership of the church Jared Gies, Alesha Hughes, John Penrod, and Mariah Williams. Through their faith statements, and their baptism – they are welcome at the Lord's Table for holy communion. We encourage their full participation in the congregation's life and worship. They automatically become members of the Illumination Youth Group of the River Valley Cluster of Churches. This group meets on Wednesday evenings at 5:30 pm at Christ Church, Ft. Thomas.

Those Bereaved

We offer prayerful support to the family and friends of Chuck Hoffmann who died on January 9, 2012. We pray the Spirit's blessing to be with Bonnie, Cheri, David and the grandchildren, Phil, Ben, Elaine and Loren during this tender time. A memorial service was held at St. John's on January 21, 2012.

Edward C. Hoffman died December 31, 2011. We pray the Spirit's comforting presence to be with Donna, Jack, family and friends during this time of their loss. A memorial service will be held later this spring 2012 in conjunction with the Ohio River Launch Club.

"God in your tender mercy, grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen."

Important Congregational Meeting

We encourage the entire membership of the Church to attend the annual Winter Congregational meeting February 5th in Fellowship Hall after Worship service, as we discuss and approve the Operating Expense Budget for 2012.

The Executive Committee and the Church Council have spent many hours preparing a spending plan for this new year that responsibly addresses our ministry and mission commitments while taking seriously our projected income.

Certain budget items have been slashed to "bare bones." In mission areas, we will seek approval from the congregation to access the Christian Mission Endowment for one year only, as we believe mission is what makes the church a church of Christ.

Please keep the 2012 Operating Budget in your prayers, for we believe it faithfully represents the ministry of Christ among us. It will be available to members on Sunday, January 22nd after worship service, and in an all-church mailing on January 26th.

With faith and dedication, we can enable this budget to underwrite great things for God!

MOVING INTO AN UNCOMMON YEAR – LET'S TAKE A 'LEAP'!

These calculations may be familiar to you, but just in case, this is how scientists explain the catch up day we add every 4 years:

- Leap years are any year that can be evenly divided by 4.
- Except . . . if it can be evenly divided by 100, then it isn't.
- Except . . . if it can be evenly divided by 400, then it is.

Because the earth rotates around the sun about 365.242375 times a year . . . but a normal year is only 365 days . . . something has to be done to 'catch up' or count that extra 0.242375. So every 4th year using the carryover amount, we add an extra day in February to bring the number fairly close to 365 before we start the 4 yr. pattern over again. Why? We do this so the calendar year (based on the Gregorian calendar) can be synchronized with the astronomical/ seasonal year.

SO WHAT WILL WE DO WITH THIS UNCOMMON YEAR?

Following my comments last month about making the new year really 'new' (at least in some ways), this idea of taking a 'leap' seems to fit right in. Baby steps and slow incremental growth don't describe a leap year or 'uncommon' year mentality and just 'things as they usually are' wouldn't fit this picture either.

So this would lead us to explore even further just what kind of 'leap' we might be talking about. If it's a literal leap, perhaps there's a new career or retirement ahead, or a physical move from one place to another; maybe we're learning a new skill, adding to or subtracting from our family group, making other specific changes in our lives or environment. Many other real 'leaps' could be among our days of 2012.

But I'm asking both you and me to think about the leaps we might make that are not so concrete – like building or re-building a relationship, giving ourselves time for deeper reflection and contemplation, being open to the experiences of others as they really are (not just what the news media says they are), encouraging the vision for St. John's to grow its ministry with our neighbors and community.

Others in northern Kentucky have been encouraging us and some even financially supporting how we might answer new calls to service – possibly leading to a 'leap' which earlier we might have thought exceeded our grasp and our dreams. Let's all consider what '**leap** of faith' we might commit to in 2012!



A Note from the Ministry Intern

Most of us can recall a time in our lives when a simple question or statement from another person caused us to stop for a moment and reflect on some basic insight or truth of profound importance. Singer-songwriter and UCC pastor Brian Sirchio tells the story of one such occasion. He had travelled to Haiti to work in an orphanage located in one of the country's poorest neighborhoods. When he asked what he could do to help, he was given a pair of scissors and instructed to start giving hair cuts to a long line of waiting children and adults. Brian had no barbering skills, but realized that he better learn quickly because the need was great. As he went about this task, one of the children asked him a simple question, "Are you rich?" Taken aback for a moment by this question, Brian asked, "What do you mean?" "I mean," the child replied, "do you eat every day?"

Do you eat every day? For many people in the world, in our country, and indeed in our own neighborhood, this is a question that can't be taken for granted. Since the start of the economic downturn at the end of 2007, Northern Kentucky food pantries and soup kitchens have seen a significant increase in the number of individuals and families who need assistance with basic nutrition. Many of those individuals and families were self-sufficient in the recent past, but job losses and other economic struggles have left them scrambling to make ends meet. The need is greater now than ever before for the food related ministries of St. John's church.

Several recent developments are impacting how we are doing this urban ministry. We recently gained access to the Freestore Foodbank which will stretch our resources as we stock the shelves of our food pantry. For several years we have also participated in The Safety-net Alliance, a collaborative effort of agencies and churches that strives to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of services provided to Northern Kentuckians in need. I will be meeting with this group over the next few months to learn how we can continue to increase the impact of our food pantry by coordinating it with other resources and services in the area. Through your continued hard work and support of these ministries, we will all work toward a day when everyone in our neighborhood can answer "Yes!" to the question, "Do you eat every day?"

With hope,

Ken

"If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom will be like noonday." Isaiah 58:2



Care Angel Notes



Care Angels,

Thank you so much for the pretty poinsettia that Orlin brought to me. I really appreciate your caring and thoughtfulness.

Thanks Again,
Ruth Thorn

Dear Care Angels,

Sorry we couldn't get together during the Holidays this year. I do want to thank you for the photo of the Sanctuary of St. John's. It certainly is beautiful. Maybe you can visit with me sometime whenever you are in this area.

Blessings and Sincerely,
Ruth Janson

Many thanks to the St. John's Care Angels for the beautiful plant and caring. A special thanks to Dottie Hecky and also the photo of the Sanctuary.

Bea Penrod

St. John's Care Angels,

Thank you for your love, support, and surprises for Mom and me. Wanda Quinn brought Mom a beautiful Christmas Cactus and a beautiful poinsettia for me. Mom especially enjoyed Wanda's visit at the nursing home.

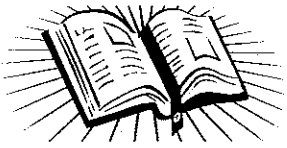
We thank you for the picture of our beautiful Sanctuary at Christmas. The picture is hanging on the wall of Mom's room at the Baptist Village Care Center.

All of the above items are helping Mom and me to stay connected to our beloved St. John's United Church of Christ.

Joan Berkemeyer



Scripture Readings



for February

Sunday, February 5

Isaiah 40:21-31
 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
 Mark 1:29-39

Sunday, February 12

2 Kings 5:1-14
 Psalm 30
 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
 Mark 1:40-45

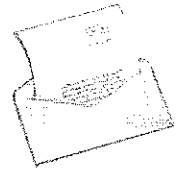
Sunday, February 19

2 Kings 2:1-12
 Psalm 50:1-6
 2 Corinthians 4:3-6
 Mark 9:2-9

Sunday, February 26

Genesis 9:8-17
 Psalm 25:1-10
 1 Peter 3:18-22
 Mark 1:9-15

On behalf of my father and our extended family, I would like to thank Pastor Hecky for his visits, concerns, and prayers during my mother's (Lauretta Baxter) recent illness and passing. My mother found much comfort in Pastor Hecky being there and his words of hope and faith granted her peace during her final days.



Unfortunately, Pastor Hecky was out of town for my mother's memorial service so we were so blessed that Rev. Marksberry was available and what a wonderful service he performed for my mother. My mother was always very fond of Rev. Marksberry from their years in the church back in the 1980s.

A special thank you to Gary Wagner for his monthly communion visits. My mother just loved that time, and she loved the fact that Gary would sit there and take the time to sit and talk, never felt rushed.

Mom loved her St John's Church Family and we thank everyone for loving her.

Darlene Dawson on behalf of father Clyde Baxter and extended family.

I would like to thank the congregation for all of their cards, prayers and support for my confirmation. The journey started 14 weeks ago and I know I will continue to grow in my faith and with your support and care, I know that I can do anything!

Thanks again,
 Alesha Hughes

BOARDS, ORGANIZATIONS, MEETINGS AND OUTREACH

ST. JOHN'S ADULT LIBRARY

Your library committee has been working on the Marjorie Kendrick Reading List for 2012; however, we have run into some difficulties due to equipment failure. Therefore, the reading list will not be available until late January or early February. Look for information in the Sunday bulletin on beginning dates. We are sorry for the delay. Please keep reading the books currently on the shelves.

The Library Committee:
 Bette Kendrick, Rose Dunn, Marjorie Fuldner, Carolyn Garriott,
 Marcia Schmidt, and Sue Williams

**SUNDAY SCHOOL MEMORIAL**

In loving memory of Marlene Gemmer
Homer Gemmer

FOOD PANTRY

In loving memory of Laurretta Baxter
Rose Dunn
Gary Wagner
Mary Lehmkuhl
Pat Straus
In loving memory of Ed Hoffman
Jan Rossow
In loving memory of Sue Wagner
Gary Wagner
James and Diane Wendel
In loving memory of Elmer J. Haas
Karen Schofield

ROOF FUND

In loving memory of Laurretta Baxter
Walt Dauzenberg
In loving Memory of Chuck Hoffmann
Roy and Shirley Rice
In loving memory of Sue Wagner
Gary Wagner

MEMORIAL FUND

In loving memory of Elmer J. Haas
Tom Haas
In loving memory of Laurretta Baxter
Howard and Ruth Hanson
James and Wilma Scharber
Darlene Wind
Ray and Maryann Bealsch
Alice Hunt and family
In loving memory of Carroll and
Marjorie Alexander
William and Barbara Rowekamp
In loving memory of Chuck Hoffmann
Margie Schaufuss

MUSIC FUND

In loving memory of Laurretta Baxter
Ben and Janet Grant

**WILLIAM R. ROSSOW
MEMORIAL FUND - (Care Notes)**

In loving memory of William B.
Rossow
Dr. Rossow and Dr. Kemen

**Prayers for Members**

Jim and Susan Colding
son and grandson
Maggie Deaton
James Gies
Betty Haas
Rory Kiefer
Darlene Knepshield Surg 2-6
Bill Malone
Jack and Jean Morrow
Roy Rice

Prayers for Homebound Members

Martha Beighle
Glenn Bogart
Tressa Downs
Ruth Janson
June Jana
Bea Penrod
Vala Shay
Irene Steele

**Prayers for Members in Assisted
Living and Nursing Homes:**

Baptist Home
Virginia Bennett
Betty Moreland
Dutch Scholl

Baptist Village Care Center
Helen Berkemeyer

Barrington
Gabbie Schoo
Jane Schwarberg
Thelma Ulbricht

Emeritus (formally Brighton Gardens)
Gert Hambrick

Carmel Manor
Betty Connors
Enola Falk
Ruth Finnell
Tom Swope

Chapel Grove Inn

Ida Wittman

Harborside

Willa Fordyce

Highlands

Golda Hampton

Highland Crossing

Lil Doty

Lifecare Center of Columbus (TN)

Dorothy Howell

Providence Pavillion

Irene Steele

River Valley View Butler, KY

Martha Ziegler

Prayers for:**Baptism of:****Those Bereaved:**

The Family of Chuck Hoffmann

Confirmands:

Mariah Williams
Alesha Hughes
John Penrod
Jared Gies
Emily Karrick
Sara Mai
Karolyn Lukjan

Prayers for Family & Friends

Linda Barnett per Audrey Harris*
Paula Bonfert per B Walter*
Bryant Family
Laurie Conley per N White*
Lee and Nancy Daul per R
Pettus*
Paula Dunaway per T Watts*
Family of Tracy Deaton
Sandy Deinlein per B Walter*
Priscilla Drach per D Hecky*
David Dunn per R Dunn*
Judy Eads per S Hecky*
Joe Farris per D Hecky*
Judy Johnson per B Runge*
Ed Henry per M Gibson*
The Family of Ed Hoffman
Betty Hoskins per Heloise Rolf
Mary Jo Kenter per J Jana*
Harold Kohl per B Stormer*
Mary Jo Long per W Watts*
Brian Osterhage per B Webster*

Cheryl Parrish per B Walter*
 Greg Pennington per Debbie Hecky*
 Brenda Pike per B Walter*
 Jennifer Romanski per D Hecky*
 Sara Runge Pulte per B Runge*
 Char Scholl per C Garriott*
 Bonnie Schwab per S Hecky*
 Bethany Schmitt per M Schmidt*
 Karen Seifried per M Gibson*
 Bud Stephens per M Sullivan*
 Surg. 1-25
 Jeff Stitt per M Schmidt*
 James Thomas per Pam Maloney*
 Mary Thomas per P Maloney*
 The Family of Bernice Vossmeier
 Kathy Walters per S Walters*
 Rick Witte per Gary Wagner*
 Roxanne Will per Marty Gibson*
 Family of Millie Young
 Alice Zoller per M Gibson*

Prayers for St. John's

- ◇ The Congregation
- ◇ Our minister, Steve Hecky
- ◇ All the staff of St. John's
- ◇ Our Lay Leaders
- ◇ All Church Ministries

General Prayers

- ◇ All world leaders and our enemies
- ◇ The homeless & people living in poverty
- ◇ Victims of war, violence, and injustice
- ◇ Discovery of cures for major diseases
- ◇ Health Care Givers and Health Care System
- ◇ All affected by the natural disasters
- ◇ The economy
- ◇ Churches of the River Valley Cluster
- Phillippus UCC Cincinnati, OH**
- ◇ RVCC Youth Covenant Cluster

During Times of War and Conflict

O Prince of Peace, we humbly ask Your protection for our men and women in military service. Give them courage to serve with honor. Protect our land and its people from enemies within and without. Instill in the hearts and minds of men and women everywhere a firm purpose to live forever in peace and good will toward all. Amen.

Our Members and Friends in the Military per Church Office

Melanie & Jake Adams
 Susie Adams
 Matthew & Amy Baab **Afghanistan**
 Brandon Bailey
 Brandon Bird
 Nikolas Deaton
 Scott Decker
 Joseph Fitzgerald
 Chester Frost III
 John A. Hamen
 Gevin Helf
 Michael Hudson **Afghanistan**
 Randy Johnson
 Dan Loughry

Johnathon McCoy
 Andy Powell
 Ashley Roberts
 Jon Rossow
 Greg Sarakatsannis **Italy**
 Nicholas Schierberg
 Joe Schneider
 Jessica Sherrod
 David Siry **Kuwait**
 Chris Spurrier
 Michael Sullivan **Afghanistan**
 Brian Trinkle **Afghanistan**
 Rob Wickelhaus **Spec. Services**
 Bernie Zmurk

If there is someone in the Armed Forces you would like us to pray for, please call the office at 431-1818

New Address

Paul and Pam Schierberg
 1624 Liscourt Drive
 Venice, FL 34292

Reflections

(Read Isaiah 60:1-6)

MORNING

Illuminating One and Light of the World, as a moth is attracted to a flame, so I desire to make conscious contact with you, the light of life, at the beginning of this day.

EVENING

Illuminating One and Light of the World, God of the day and of the night, as the shades of evening fall around me and I assess the day that is coming to a close, I once again turn to you in the spirit of prayer.

Your prophet of old reminds me that you are the creator of all nations and all people; so I know that you are my God. You desire to dispel the gloom that sometimes creeps into the world with the radiance of your love. You desire to enrich life with the gifts of your Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. You also call me to brighten the lives of others with your love.

MORNING

May what I say and do in the hours to come emulate the example I have experienced in Jesus, who taught his followers to pray.

(Prayers of Intercession)

EVENING

Forgive me, Enlightening One, if throughout this day, in any way, I have hurt rather than helped, clouded rather than brightened, made poorer rather than richer, any life that intersected with mine.

(Prayers of Intercession)

ILLUMINATING ONE, YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. MAY I LEARN FROM MY MISTAKES
SO THAT TOMORROW MY LIFE WILL MORE FULLY REFLECT YOUR WILL AND WAYS.

MORNING

God, be now my light throughout the light of this day! In the name of the Light of Life. Amen.

EVENING

God, grant me rest, I pray, in the knowledge that I am in the loving care of you who neither slumbers nor sleeps. In the name of the Light of Life. Amen.